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THE HISTORY OF FRANCE,

FROM THE ACCESSION OF

HENRY THE THIRD,

TO THE DEATH OF

LOUIS THE FOURTEENTH.

PRECEDED BY

A VIEW

OF THE

CIVIL, MILITARY, AND POLITICAL

STATE OF EUROPE,

BETWEEN THE MIDDLE, AND THE CLOSE, OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY.

By NATHANIEL WILLIAM WRAXALL.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LONDON:
Printed for A. STRAHAN and T. CADELL:
And Sold by T. CADELL Junior, and W. DAVIES, (Succeſſors to Mr. CADELL,) in the Strand.
1795.

00141714

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FRANCE.

BOOK THE FIRST.

The Reign of HENRY THE THIRD.

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Review of the French hiſtory, from the death of Francis the Firſt, to that of Charles the Ninth.—Aſpect of France, at the latter period.—Situation of the court, the capital, and the provinces, in 1574.—Regency, and meaſures of Catherine of Medecis.—Execution of Montgomery.—Flight of Henry the Third, from Poland.—His reception at Vienna, Venice, and Turin.—Affairs of France.—Journey of the court to Lyons.—Political intrigues at Turin.—Return of Henry, and his entry into France.

THE French monarchy, from the period of the expulſion of the Engliſh, under Charles the Seventh, and the ſubſequent re-union of the great fiefs to the crown, was, for near a century, in a ſtate of conſtant progreſſion and advancement. The ſucceſsful irruptions of Charles the Eighth, and Louis the Twelfth, into Italy; CHAP. I.

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and the conqueſts, made by thoſe princes, beyond the Alps, however tranſitory, evinced how formidable France might ſoon become to the repoſe of Europe. Francis the Firſt, with inferior forces, maintained a long, and almoſt perpetual conflict, during his whole reign, againſt the head of the empire, ſupported by the veteran bands of Italy, Spain, and the Netherlands. The compact and collected nature of his dominions; their happy poſition, in the center of his enemy's poſſeſſions; and the facility with which, from the extent of his prerogative, he could draw pecuniary ſupplies from his ſubjects: theſe circumſtances enabled him to balance, and even to limit, the unwieldy greatneſs of the houſe of Auſtria. Notwithſtanding the defeat of Pavia, and the numerous diſgraces or calamities experienced at various times, during his reign, which were principally owing to his negligence, profuſion, or miſconduct; he left the kingdom, at his deceaſe, rich, flouriſhing, and capable of the greateſt external exertions [1].

State of France, under Francis the Firſt.

1547.

The eaſtern frontier was extended and ſtrengthened under his ſucceſſor, Henry the Second, by the acquiſition of Metz, Toul, and Verdun, diſmembered from the German empire; and their capture was rendered peculiarly memorable by the ſiege which Francis, duke of Guiſe, ſuſtained againſt the emperor, Charles the Fifth, in perſon. The victory of St. Quintin, where the conſtable Montmorenci, with the flower of the French nobility, fell into the hands of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy; and which, if it had been improved, might have ſubverted the monarchy of France itſelf; was, in a great meaſure, rendered ineffectual by the procraſtination, delays, and inaptitude of Philip the Second for conducting military affairs. The recal of the duke of Guiſe from Italy, not only diſſipated the general conſternation; but, diffuſed univerſal ſatisfaction, by the vigorous and ſucceſsful attack of Calais, which the incapacity of Mary, queen of England, had expoſed to danger. That valuable conqueſt was retained

1552. Reign of Henry the Second.

1553.

1557.

1558. January.

[1] Mezerai, paſſim.

at

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at the final treaty of peace, which ſoon afterwards took place between the two crowns of France and Spain: nor was even the evacuation and reſtitution of Savoy and Piedmont, ſo long occupied by the French arms, unaccompanied with advantage; as it precluded a renewal of the ruinous and expenſive expeditions for the recovery of Naples and the Milaneſe, which, for more than ſixty years, from the reign of Charles the Eighth, to that of Henry the Second, had impoveriſhed, and exhauſted the kingdom [2].

1559. January.

The premature and tragical death of Henry, which happened, in the midſt of the feſtivities conſequent on the termination of the war, by a ſplinter from the count of Montgomery's lance, may be regarded as the æra, from whence we date the calamities of France. His ſon, and ſucceſſor, Francis the Second, though he had paſſed the age, at which the French monarchs were declared to be no longer in their minority; was, from inexperience, as well as from the very limited nature of his capacity, unequal to conducting in perſon, the machine of government. Under theſe circumſtances, the adminiſtration was rather aſſumed by, than delegated to the duke of Guiſe, and cardinal of Lorrain; whoſe proximity of blood to Mary, the young queen of France and Scotland, ſuſtained by their talents, ambition, and enterprize, enabled them to ſurmount all oppoſition. The unpopularity of their meaſures; their deſcent from, and alliance with the houſe of Lorrain, which might be regarded as foreign, if not hoſtile to the French intereſts; and more than either, the intemperate and perſecuting ſpirit, evinced towards the followers of the reformed religion, who were numerous and powerful: theſe combined cauſes, operating on minds, already heated by controverſy, produced the famous conſpiracy of Amboiſe. Its object was, in ſome degree, equivocal and unaſcertained: but, the Guiſes, confounding any attempt to ſubvert their own authority, with the crime of treaſon, ſeverely

July. Acceſſion of Francis the Second.

Conſpiracy of Amboiſe.

1560. March.

[2] De Thou, Mezerai, paſſim.

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1560.

puniſhed its authors, and diſplayed the full extent of royal, and miniſterial vengeance, in the executions which followed. Intoxicated with proſperity, and ſtimulated by motives of perſonal ſafety, they determined to proſecute with equal rigor, the concealed abettors of the enterprize. Louis, prince of Condé, was juſtly regarded as ſuch; and his high quality, which allied him to the crown, formed no protection againſt the machinations of his enemies. Seduced by aſſurances of ſecurity, to attend the convocation of the ſtates-general at Orleans, he was ſeized, impriſoned, and, after a trial deſtitute even of the formalities of juſtice, he was ſentenced to an immediate death. Anthony, king of Navarre, his elder brother, and firſt prince of the blood, whoſe more flexible and yielding character rendered him leſs an object of apprehenſion, was detained in confinement. But, at this critical moment, the ſudden death of the young king, Francis, reſcued the prince of Condé from his impending danger, and opened a new ſcene in France[3].

December. Death of Francis the Second.

1561. Charles the Ninth.

A minority, in name, as well as in effect, took place. Charles the Ninth, who ſucceeded to the throne, was ſtill in his childhood, and it became indiſpenſable to nominate a regent. Catherine of Medecis, the queen mother, who had hitherto remained in a ſtate of comparative obſcurity; availing herſelf with promptitude and addreſs, of the conſternation of the Guiſes, of the depreſſion of the princes of the blood, and of the abſence or diſgrace of the conſtable Montmorenci; procured her own elevation to the regency. If the rectitude of her intentions had equalled the extent and verſatility of her talents, it is probable, that her adminiſtration might have been equally pacific, and beneficial to the kingdom. But, regardleſs of veracity and honor, ſhe ſubſtituted artifice and diſſimulation in their ſtead; while, only intent on the preſervation and prolongation of her own authority, ſhe ſacrificed to it the great intereſts of the ſtate and monarchy. Incapable of cruſhing, or of coërcing by force the various factions, ſhe

Regency of Catherine of Medecis.

Syſtem of her adminiſtration.

[3] Mezerai, De Thou, Davila.

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attempted to divide them, and to render herſelf the common arbitreſs: but, the effort exceeded her ſtrength, and the object eluded her graſp. The Guiſes, recovered from their firſt aſtoniſhment, and ſupported by their own intrepidity, formed a coalition with their antient rival, the conſtable, whoſe zeal for the ſupport of the Catholic religion prompted him to bury in oblivion all paſt animoſities. Marſhal St. André, one of the moſt powerful noblemen of the court, joined the confederacy; and France, like antient Rome, ſaw a triumvirate, in title as well as reality, form itſelf in her own boſom. The king of Navarre, fluctuating in his opinions, religious and political; allured by the ſpecious and illuſory promiſes of the Guiſes; and jealous of his brother's ſuperior conſideration, lent his aid to the triumvirs. Superior to all controul, they no longer obſerved even the forms of deference, or ſubmiſſion to the regent; and Catherine, deſtitute of any other reſource, embraced the dangerous expedient of calling to her aid the prince of Condé, who, with the admiral Coligni, commanded the forces of the Hugonots [4].

1561. Factions in the court.

1562. Commencement of the civil wars.

From this fatal meaſure originated the diſſenſions, by which France was long afflicted and deſolated. Three civil wars, each more fiercely conteſted than the preceding one, extinguiſhed all loyalty, obedience, or veneration for the laws. In their progreſs, the principal actors were ſwept off by various ſpecies of violent and premature death. The king of Navarre was killed by a ball, in the trenches before Rouen. St. André periſhed at the battle of Dreux; and the duke of Guiſe himſelf, who, with ſome defects of character, muſt ever be ranked among the moſt exalted and illuſtrious perſons of the age, expired by the hand of an aſſaſſin, under the walls of Orleans. Montmorenci, at near fourſcore years of age, fell, covered with honorable wounds, in the action at St. Denis; while the prince of Condé was put to death on the field of Jarnac, rather by deliberate aſſaſſination, than by the chance of war.

1562. November.

December.

1563. February.

1567. November.

1569. March.

[4] Davila, p. 120. De Thou, Mezerai.

Catherine

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Catherine ſtill ſurvived among the ruins of the monarchy, and had placed her ſecond ſon, Henry, duke of Anjou, for whom ſhe early betrayed the fondeſt predilection, at the head of the royal armies, deſtined to exterminate the Hugonots. But, that party, far from being extinguiſhed by the loſs of their leader, ſeemed to acquire new vigor, under the guidance of the celebrated Coligni. A fourth battle, at Montcontour, in which the arms of Charles the Ninth were completely victorious, did not terminate the conteſt. Supported by his own reſources, Coligni, after ſtruggling with impediments, only to be ſurmounted by men who fight for their religious freedom, re-appeared in the enſuing year, at the head of a formidable body of forces; repulſed the troops ſent to impede his progreſs; and even threatened to transfer the theatre of war to the vicinity of the capital [5].

1569. Duke of Anjou, placed at the head of the army.

October.

In ſuch a ſituation, peace became not only eligible, but indiſpenſable. It was concluded ſoon afterwards, and the conditions were highly favorable to the Hugonots [6]. The meaſures of the court appeared to have undergone a total change, and to breathe conciliation. Coligni was invited to repair to the royal preſence; and Charles affected to liſten with eagerneſs and pleaſure, to his exhortations of employing the fiery and turbulent ſpirits, with which the kingdom abounded, in foreign expeditions of national glory, or advantage. The marriage of the young prince of Navarre, with Margaret, ſiſter to the king, was already ſettled; and every circumſtance ſeemed to enſure a long continuance of tranquillity. Theſe fallacious appearances preceded, and eventually terminated in the maſſacre of Paris: an event, which, whether we regard it as the joint act of Charles and Catherine his mother; as the ſeparate machination of the queen herſelf; or, as produced only by adventitious cauſes, unconnected with any deliberate ſyſtem of perfidy; ſtands equally alone, as the moſt flagitious and deteſtable violation of faith and humanity, commemo-

1570. Concluſion of peace.

Auguſt.

1572. Auguſt. Maſſacre of Paris.

[5] Mezerai, paſſim. De Thou, Davila, D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ.

[6] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 49 and 50.

rated

CHAP. I.

rated in the annals of mankind. Its conſequences, nevertheleſs, were not ſuch, as might naturally have been expected. The ſecurity, ſupineneſs, and inactivity of the government, allowed the Hugonots leiſure to recover from their firſt conſternation. Deſpair furniſhed them with arms; and Rochelle ventured to ſhut its gates againſt the forces of the Crown. Henry, duke of Anjou, after a long and fruitleſs ſiege, was compelled to withdraw his troops from the place; and eſteemed himſelf fortunate, that his election to the crown of Poland afforded him an honorable pretext for abandoning the enterprize. France was deſolated by a fourth civil war; and the mutual animoſity, manifeſted in the courſe of it, bore a proportion to the circumſtances by which it had been produced [7].

1572.

Siege of Rochelle.

1573. June.

The ambitious mind of Catherine of Medecis, perpetually occupied in viſionary ſchemes for the elevation of her children, had profited of the extinction of the race of Jagellon, to procure the Poliſh crown for her favourite ſon, Henry. The levity and venality of the Poles; the political intrigues of Montluc, the French embaſſador; and the reputation which the duke of Anjou had acquired for military ſkill and valor, by his victories over the Hugonots; combined to produce the unexpected ſucceſs with which the attempt was accompanied. But, the new monarch did not betray the ſame alacrity to take poſſeſſion of his dominions, which he had manifeſted in their purſuit and attainment. The extenſive power, annexed to his quality of lieutenant general of France; the pleaſures of a licentious court; and the proſpect of the ſucceſſion itſelf, which Charles's ſtate of declining health rendered probable: all theſe motives tended to retard his departure. The interpoſition, and even the menaces of the king, his brother, were requiſite to propel and vanquiſh the reluctance of Henry [8].

Election of the duke of Anjou to the crown of Poland.

October.

His abſence was far from reſtoring a calm; and the concluſion of the reign of Charles the Ninth was marked with the ſame commotions, which had characterized its commencement and progreſs. The

1574. New commotions in France.

[7] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 105. De Thou, vol. vi. p. 664. Davila, p. 390—3.

[8] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 104—112.

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1574.

duke of Alenſon, youngeſt of the four ſons of Henry the Second, and whoſe youth had excluded him from any participation in the counſels which led to the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew; expreſſed the warmeſt affection for the admiral Coligni, and the utmoſt indignation at his unmerited fate. Anxious to occupy the ſituation of lieutenant-general, left vacant by the king of Poland's election; and finding his demands eluded, he projected to effect his eſcape, and to put himſelf at the head of the Proteſtants. He was to have been accompanied in his flight by the king of Navarre, who, after having been, not without long debates, excepted from the general carnage of his friends and followers, was, ſince that period, detained as a captive, together with his couſin, the prince of Condé. The irreſolution of the duke of Alenſon proved fatal to the enterprize, and conducted his adherents to the ſcaffold; while Charles the Ninth, after long ſtruggling with a diſtemper, which the vigor of his conſtitution enabled him to reſiſt, but, not to ſurmount; terminated his life and reign, in the flower of his age[*].

Death of Charles the Ninth.

May.

Aſpect of France, at that period.

The aſpect of France, at the time of his deceaſe, was widely different from the appearance which it exhibited under Henry the Second. In the interval of only fifteen years, the manners of the kingdom had ſuffered a complete alteration. The generous ſpirit of chivalry, characteriſtic of the age of Francis the Firſt, and of which courteſy and humanity were the inſeparable attendants, no longer exiſted. The people, habituated to ſcenes of civil war, were rendered ferocious and ſanguinary. Almoſt all the arts, which tend to ſoften and poliſh ſociety, were buried in the general confuſion. Manufactures and induſtry languiſhed; while commerce, become precarious, from the inſecurity of the coaſts, and hazardous, on account of the piracies which infeſted the narrow ſeas, annually diminiſhed. Even agriculture, ſo indiſpenſable to the exiſtence of every ſtate, was

Anarchy, and inſurrections.

[*] Mezeray, vol. ix. p. 124. Davila, 407. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 63.

faintly

faintly and imperfectly carried on; while the peaſants, plundered and maſſacred by a licentious ſoldiery, had neither any ſecurity for the poſſeſſion of their lives, nor for the enjoyment of their property. Bands of foreign mercenaries, with which France was inundated, compleated the general deſolation. Elizabeth, queen of England, whoſe generoſity was always under the guidance of her policy, had early ſent aſſiſtance to the prince of Condé; and had received from him the important town of Havre de Grace, at the mouth of the Seine, as a ſecurity for her repayment. The united efforts of the Catholics and Hugonots, had afterwards ejected her from the poſſeſſion: but, her fleets continued to infeſt the coaſt of Normandy, to throw ſupplies of arms and proviſions into Rochelle, and to moleſt the general trade of the kingdom. Philip the Second, king of Spain, whoſe zeal for the ſupport of the Romiſh faith and church, ſerved as a maſk to conceal his purpoſes of intereſt and ambition, ſent repeatedly ſupplies of troops to the aid of Charles; but, only attentive to prolong the calamities of France, and to avert the ſtorm from his provinces in the Netherlands, he withdrew them, before they could render any effectual ſervice to the royal cauſe.

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Conduct of Elizabeth.

Of Philip the Second.

Switzerland, for near a century, ſince the reign of Louis the Eleventh, had conſtantly raiſed a body of ſtipendiaries, which was maintained by the French kings. To their fidelity, Charles the Ninth owed the preſervation of his liberty, if not of his crown, at the famous retreat from Meaux to Paris; and in the battle of Dreux, their valor had not a little contributed to the victory, finally obtained over the Hugonots. The ſovereign pontiffs, deeply intereſted in the conteſt between the adherents of the two religions, had unlocked the treaſury of St. Peter, and diſpatched not only pecuniary, but, military ſupport, to the eldeſt ſon of the church. But, it was from Germany, the fruitful nurſe of ſoldiers in the ſixteenth century, that the moſt inexhauſtible ſupplies of men were furniſhed. While the princes of Saxony, attached to the Catholic party, aided the crown; the elector

Of the Switzers.

Of the popes.

Of the Germans.

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palatine, not leſs zealouſly devoted to the doctrines and followers of the Reformation, ſent a numerous army to the aſſiſtance of Condé and Coligni. The Landſkenets and Reitres compoſed a principal part of the forces on either ſide; and, though numbers periſhed in the repeated conflicts, the ſurvivors returned to their native country, loaded with the ſpoils, and enriched by the treaſures of France [10].

Policy and meaſures of the queen dowager.

Theſe calamities, great in themſelves, were not diminiſhed, nor alleviated, by the probable proſpect of any immediate, or beneficial change. The maxims and policy of Catherine of Medecis, which had plunged the kingdom into ſuch accumulated diſtreſs, continued ſtill to operate in all their force. That authority, which ſhe had exerciſed during the minority of the late king, ſhe retained after its termination, though no longer inveſted with the title of Regent. Her vaſt and capacious mind, fertile in the arts of deſtruction, had planned, matured, and executed, the maſſacre of Paris. The remorſe, which Charles the Ninth felt from his reflections on it, heightened by his reſentment at Catherine's predilection for her ſecond ſon, Henry, had not only conduced to make him withdraw from her his confidence, but, even to menace her with the effects of his indignation. The progreſs of diſeaſe, and the diminution of his intellectual and bodily ſtrength, as he approached the end of life, had effaced, or weakened, theſe unfavorable impreſſions. His apprehenſion of the duke of Alenſon's deſign to impede the return of the king of Poland, and to infringe the order of ſucceſſion, had even induced him, in his laſt moments, not without manifeſt ſigns of reluctance, to entruſt the government to his mother, and to delegate to her the regency. Thoſe, who looked forward to futurity, anticipated with regret and apprehenſion, the augmentation of her influence, under the reign of a prince, who had always received from her, and evinced towards her, the ſtrongeſt marks of reciprocal affection [11].

[10] De Thou, D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. Davila, Mezerai, paſſim.

[11] Ut ſupra, paſſim.

Francis,

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Francis, duke of Alenſon, youngeſt of the four ſons of Henry the Second, had not hitherto exhibited any endowments of diſpoſition or character, which could juſtly excite the hopes, or awaken the expectations of his countrymen. Fickle and inconſtant in his friendſhips; irreſolute in his temper; timid and puſillanimous in adverſity; ſeduced by favorites and flatterers; plunged in diſſolute pleaſures; and deſtitute of that elevation of ſentiment, or generous ambition, which connects the public intereſts with its own; he acted only a ſubordinate part: and notwithſtanding his high quality of preſumptive heir to the crown, he was treated as a priſoner of ſtate [12]. 1574. Duke of Alenſon.

The king of Navarre, afterwards ſo diſtinguiſhed under the name of Henry the Fourth, and who was reſerved by Providence to reſtore tranquillity to his country; had diſplayed, under circumſtances the moſt humiliating, a firmneſs of mind and magnanimity, which impreſſed even his enemies with reſpect and admiration. His valor, courteſy, and humanity, had endeared him to the nation. But, deprived of his patrimonial dominions; ſeparated from his friends and adherents; compelled to abjure his religion; regarded by the queen mother with jealouſy and ſuſpicion; deſtitute of reſources, and detained in an inglorious captivity; all his great qualities were buried in obſcurity, and did not unfold themſelves till called into action, by the augmenting calamities of France [13]. King of Navarre.

His couſin, Henry, prince of Condé, occupied a greater portion of public attention, though removed by his birth, to a more remote diſtance from the crown. Of a character ſevere, ſerious, and reſerved; little addicted to the gratifications of pleaſure; zealouſly attached to the principles of the reformed faith and worſhip; inflexible, brave, indefatigable, active, and formed for war; he had already aſſumed an aſcendancy in the counſels of the Hugonots, and aſpired to the rank of their chief and leader. Having effected his Prince of Condé.

[12] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 102 and 114. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 37. Davila, p. 396.

[13] De Thou, and Mezerai, paſſim.

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eſcape from Amiens, he had reached the frontiers of Germany; reſumed the exerciſe of the Proteſtant religion, which Charles the Ninth had obliged him by menaces to renounce; and prepared to enter the kingdom with a formidable army [14].

Duke of Guiſe.

The place which the prince of Condé emulated as head of the Proteſtants, was poſſeſſed by the duke of Guiſe in the eſtimation of the Catholics. Nature had conferred on him almoſt all the qualifications, calculated to conciliate and retain the popular favor. Generous and munificent, even to profuſion; affable and condeſcending in his manners; intrepid, to a degree of temerity; and adorned with every grace of exterior figure and deportment, he attracted univerſal admiration. His courage, at a very early period of his life, had been diſtinguiſhed during the ſiege of Poitiers, as his father's had been at that of Metz. Deſcended from the family of Lorrain, and allied to the houſe of Bourbon; poſſeſſing an hereditary hatred for the Hugonots, and the moſt ardent zeal for the ſupport of the antient religion, he was regarded as its beſt protector. Surrounded by a numerous and powerful band of adherents; guided by the counſels of his uncle, the cardinal of Lorrain; and capable of the boldeſt projects of ambition; he ſeemed to be ſcarcely comprehended within the rank of a ſubject, and already inſpired jealouſy into the crown itſelf [15].

Family of Montmorenci.

The houſe of Montmorenci, which had formerly maintained ſo long a competition with that of Guiſe, for power and favor, was fallen into a ſtate of depreſſion and diſgrace, towards the cloſe of the reign of Charles the Ninth. The marſhal Montmorenci, eldeſt ſon to the late conſtable, one of the moſt virtuous and incorrupt noblemen of the age, who had married the natural daughter of Henry the Second, was deſtitute of iſſue. Having been implicated in the attempt of the duke of Alenſon to withdraw from court; his participation,

[14] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 122 and 139.

[15] De Thou, Mezerai, paſſim.

or

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or privity in an enterprize, regarded as ſo criminal, had afforded a pretext for committing him to the Baſtile, where he languiſhed in confinement [16]. Damville, his brother, not leſs odious to the government, owed his ſafety only to his abſence and diſtance from the capital. He had been appointed governor of the province of Languedoc; and, aware of the machinations of Catherine of Medecis, who exerted every means to ſeize his perſon, he already began to concert meaſures with the Proteſtants, for their common preſervation. The two remaining ſons of the conſtable, Thoré and Meru, involved in the common ruin or perſecution of their family, openly joined the inſurgents, who, in various quarters of the kingdom, began to appear in arms [17]. 1574.

State of Paris.

Such was the general aſpect and ſituation of France, at the death of Charles the Ninth. Paris had not yet experienced in an extended degree, the calamities inſeparable from civil war. The Hugonot armies which had twice approached its walls, were neither ſufficiently numerous nor powerful, to affect it by famine; and they were ſpeedily driven from the vicinity of the capital, by the ſuperior forces of the Catholics. The frequent reſidence, and expenſive amuſements of a voluptuous court, kept alive the arts of luxury, and diffuſed a fallacious opulence. The maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, when the city was abandoned to all the enormities of a ſanguinary and ferocious populace, had been only temporary; and the extermination of the Proteſtants had produced an apparent uniformity in religious faith and worſhip, among the inhabitants. No ſymptoms nor indications of diſloyalty and rebellion had hitherto manifeſted themſelves: on the contrary, when the marſhals Montmorenci, and Coſſe, were ſent priſoners to the Baſtile, by order of Catherine, only a ſhort time before the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth; the Pariſians had exhibited every demonſtration of joy, and had even furniſhed a guard for the ſecurity and detention of the captives [18].

[16] Davila, p. 399. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 121 and 122. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 54.
[17] Davila, 395. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 122.
[18] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 122. Davila, 399. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 54 and 55.

But,

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1574. Condition of the provinces. Normandy.

But, theſe appearances of order and proſperity in the metropolis, were contraſted with every ſpecies of misfortune in the provinces. Subordination and obedience had been ſubverted, by long habits of revolt and hoſtility. Normandy, peculiarly expoſed, by its ſituation, to the attacks of the Engliſh, was become the theatre of war. Montgomery, whoſe fatal dexterity had originally produced the calamities of his country; and who had eſcaped by flight from the carnage of his friends, at the maſſacre of Paris; having landed with a naval force, not far from Cherburg, made a rapid progreſs. Inveſted by the marſhal Matignon, in Domfront, after a brave defence againſt ſuperior numbers, he had ſurrendered upon a vague aſſurance of perſonal ſafety, which was afterwards violated. Colombieres, another of the Hugonot leaders, periſhed in the breach, at St. Lo; and every part of the province experienced the fury, or ſeverity of the royaliſts [19].

Brittany.

Brittany, protected, in ſome meaſure, by its almoſt inſular poſition, and its diſtance from the interior parts of the kingdom, enjoyed a degree of comparative calm: but, from the mouth of the Loire, to that of the Garonne, comprehending an extent of near one hundred leagues, in the richeſt, moſt populous, and commercial diſtricts of France, the Hugonots maintained a conflict with their enemies. Their principal power and reſources were concentered in Poitou, Angoumois, and Saintonge, where their numbers far exceeded thoſe of the Catholics. The battles of Jarnac and Montcontour had been fought in that quarter of the kingdom, which, during the third civil war, had been the principal theatre of military operations. Rochelle, open to the Atlantic, enjoying an extenſive trade, ſupplied by England with arms and ammunition, inhabited by zealous adherents of the reformed religion, and elated by the recent advantage gained over the duke of Anjou; already began to arrogate and aſſume a ſpecies of independance. It was to be apprehended, that a republic might ariſe within the monarchy of France, the moſt inimical to its grandeur and

Rochelle.

[19] Davila, 403—6. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 57—60. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 118 and 119.

repoſe,

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repoſe, ſupported by foreign powers, and difficult, if not impoſſible, to be reduced by force [20].

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Guyenne and Gaſcony, from the banks of the Garonne, to the foot of the Pyrenees and the frontiers of Spain, were ſcarcely more tranquil. Montluc, whoſe name has been tranſmitted by his writings, as well as by his actions, to poſterity, had during many years, exerciſed over the Hugonots in thoſe provinces, the moſt inhuman tyranny. Wounded at the ſtorm of a little town in Bigorre, and incapacitated by age and infirmities, for the fatigues of a camp; he had been recently diſmiſſed from the command of the royal forces: but, his ſucceſſor did not reſtore calm or order among the inhabitants [21]. Guienne, and Gaſcony.

In the extenſive government of Languedoc, Damville, to whom it had been entruſted, no longer profeſſed any deference for the orders of the court. Irritated by the queen mother's attempts to involve him in the proſcription of his family, he embraced a line of conduct, the moſt repugnant to his character and inclinations. Attached to the crown by gratitude and affection, he was reduced to the neceſſity of engaging in open rebellion: zealouſly devoted to the antient religion, he ſaw himſelf compelled to join with the Proteſtants. Having made himſelf maſter of Montpellier, and of ſome other places in the vicinity of the Rhone, he prepared to defend himſelf by force of arms; and he even peremptorily refuſed to lay down his office, notwithſtanding repeated mandates of the ſovereign [22]. Languedoc.

No part of the kingdom, during the whole courſe of the reign of Charles the Ninth, had ſuffered more ſeverely from civil diſſentions than the two provinces of Dauphiné and Provence. From the gates, of Lyons, to thoſe of Marſeilles, every village was fortified, and Dauphiné, and Provence.

[20] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 44 and 45. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 116, &c. Comm. de Montluc, vol. iv. p. 344. Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 396 and 397.

[21] Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. paſſim.

[22] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 48. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 119 and 120. Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 397.

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every caſtle was defended. All interior communication was ſuſpended by the exceſſes and ravages of the contending parties. The mountainous and rugged nature of the country; the facility of eſcaping into Savoy, or Switzerland; and the ſuperior numbers of the Hugonots in Dauphiné, prolonged the conteſt. The names of Montbrun, Mouvans, d'Acier, and des Adrets, on the ſide of the Proteſtants; and thoſe of the count of Sommerive, and the grand prior of France, on the other, were become deteſtable for their acts of wanton and deliberate cruelty. Humanity ſeemed to be extinct in the breaſts of the chiefs; and mutual animoſity knew no limits in the gratification of vengeance [23].

Burgundy.

Champagne.

Burgundy, which after the deceaſe of marſhal Tavannes, was committed to the care of the duke of Mayenne; and Champagne, the immediate government of his brother, the duke of Guiſe, were in a great meaſure exempt from theſe calamities. But, the oppreſſions and diſorders, committed on the inferior claſſes, by a ſoldiery deſtitute of any regular pay, were ſuch, as loudly to demand interpoſition and redreſs. The weakneſs of the government rendered it neceſſary to tolerate enormities, by which the peaſants were reduced to poverty and ruin [24].

Interior provinces.

The interior and central provinces, Berry, Auvergne, and the Limoſin, together with thoſe on the banks of the Loire, though they had largely participated in the general deſolation of the kingdom, were not marked by any characteriſtic, or diſcriminating features.

Picardy.

Picardy, the government of which had been confided to the prince of Condé, was not leſs averſe to the reformed religion. The inhabitants, credulous, iraſcible, and ſuſceptible of the ſtrongeſt impreſſions of ſuperſtition, already gave indications of that ſpirit and temper, which ſhortly afterwards fitted them for the reception and commencement of the famous union, denominated "the League."

[23] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 85 and 86. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 138.

[24] Memoires de Tavannes, p. 33—35.

The

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The firſt act of Catherine of Medecis, after the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, was inſtantly to diſpatch meſſengers, who might convey with the utmoſt ſpeed, intelligence of the event, to the king of Poland. In order to enſure obedience to her own authority, during the interval which muſt neceſſarily elapſe before his return from ſo remote a country, ſhe immediately addreſſed letters to the governors, magiſtrates, and great officers of the crown, throughout France, notifying the death of the late ſovereign, and his previous nomination of herſelf to the regency. The ſituation of public affairs, demanded meaſures equally lenient and vigorous. The Proteſtants, who had already in many provinces, taken up arms; encouraged by the vacancy of the throne, and the abſence of the legitimate ſucceſſor, were becoming daily more formidable. The prince of Condé hovered on the borders of the kingdom, ready to enter it, at the head of a numerous body of German forces. Even the Catholics had loſt their reſpect for the royal authority, and felt little attachment towards the perſon, or character of the regent. But, Catherine, long accuſtomed to the toils and labors of government; miſtreſs of all the arts of diſſimulation; and having in her cuſtody, the firſt princes of the blood, as well as the other principal perſons of whoſe fidelity ſhe was doubtful, manifeſted no ſymptoms of apprehenſion. In compliance with the uſual maxims of her conciliating and temporiſing policy, ſhe began a negotiation with La Noue, the chief of the inſurgents in Poitou; and anxious to ſuſpend all operations of a hoſtile nature, till the arrival of the new king, ſhe agreed upon a truce for two months, with the Hugonots. They were even permitted to hold a general aſſembly of their delegates, at Milhaud, in Languedoc, where meaſures might be concerted for a general pacification [25].

1574. 30th May. Meaſures of Catherine, on her aſſumption of the regency.

Truce with the Hugonots.

But, in the perſon of the count of Montgomery, her revenge, ſuperior either to the dictates of juſtice, or the conſiderations of honor,

Trial of the count of Montgomery.

[25] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 83 and 84. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 134—137. Davila, p. 411—415.

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induced her to make a diſtinguiſhed ſacrifice. That gallant and unfortunate nobleman, having ſurrendered upon the aſſurances of perſonal ſafety and protection, given him by Matignon, commander of the royal forces; had been, nevertheleſs, by Catherine's expreſs command, transferred to Paris. The parliament, ſubſervient to the regent's wiſhes, became the inſtrument of her vengeance. Montgomery, upon pretexts equally frivolous and inſufficient, was condemned to ſuffer capital puniſhment, as guilty of treaſon; and he was previouſly put to the torture, in order to extort from him an avowal of the pretended conſpiracy, meditated by the admiral Coligni, againſt Charles the Ninth. His courage and magnanimity did not forſake him, under circumſtances ſo trying. He bore the rack, without uttering any exclamations, except thoſe of indignation for the breach of faith, committed againſt him; and though diſlocated in all his limbs, by the ſeverity of the torture, he preſerved an intrepid countenance to the laſt moment of his life. From the ſledge, on which he was drawn to the place of execution, he addreſſed the populace, and deſired their prayers. On the ſcaffold, he evinced the ſame unſhaken conſtancy and compoſure, terminating by the hand of the executioner, a career, which had been diſtinguiſhed in its courſe, by many brilliant atchievments. His real crime, for which he ſuffered, was the unintentional death of Henry the Second; and Catherine offered him up as a victim to the memory of her huſband. "Memorable example," ſays de Thou, "to teach us, that in "the ſtrokes which attack crowned heads, misfortune is criminal, "even though the will be innocent[26]!"

His execution.

26th June.

While

[26] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 87. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 135 and 136. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 130 and 131.

D'Aubigné, who was a ſpectator of Montgomery's death, has left us the moſt circumſtantial and intereſting detail of that event. It may ſerve, in many particulars, to excite equal pity and indignation. "The count," ſays he, "wept, when he was informed of the "deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, and from that "inſtant regarded his own execution as certain. The commiſſioners, before whom he "was examined, would not exempt him from "the

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While theſe events took place in France, the king of Poland received at Cracow, the news of his brother's death, and his own ſucceſſion. Two very different modes of action preſented themſelves to him, and claimed his mature deliberation. The firſt, more honorable and dignified, was, to demand permiſſion of the ſenate to return to his hereditary dominions, and to endeavour to procure the election of the duke of Alenſon to the Poliſh crown. The other, more expeditious and ſecure, was, by a precipitate retreat, or rather flight, to gain the frontiers of the Auſtrian territories, and regardleſs of every inferior conſideration, to preſent himſelf again in France. The latter advice, more analogous to the character, and gratifying to the inclinations of Henry, prevailed. After having made the neceſſary diſpoſitions for concealing his deſign, he quitted his capital under cover of the night, with only a few attendants; and was already on the borders of Sileſia, before his departure was univerſally known in Cracow. The Poles, irritated at ſo contemptuous a dereliction of the royalty to which they had recently elevated him, manifeſted their reſentment, by arreſting the principal perſons of his court, who remained in their hands: but, the ſenate being aſſembled, and having

Flight of the king of Poland, from Cracow.

18th June.

" the torture, though he did not attempt to " diſguiſe, or to conceal any fact. He was " conducted to the ſcaffold, in the " Place de " Greve," dreſſed in mourning; and after " having complained, that his executioners " had broken his limbs, by the violence of " the application of the torture, he com- " poſed his countenance, in order to harangue " the ſpectators." D'Aubigné has preſerved Montgomery's ſpeech in this laſt, and trying ſituation. It breathes all the energy and elevation of a mind, ſuſtained by a cauſe which appeared to him to be a good one, and for which he had ſacrificed every conſideration. He denied and reprobated the abſurd pretexts, which Catherine of Medecis and his judges had uſed, in order to condemn him as guilty of treaſon. Having mentioned his involuntary crime in the death of Henry the Second, he enjoined the multitude aſſembled, to inform his ſons, who had been involved in the penalties of his ſentence, and degraded from the rank of nobles; that, " if " they had not the virtue to regain it, and " to reſtore themſelves, he conſented to " their degradation." He proteſted that his only real guilt conſiſted in his ſteady adherence to a religion, proſcribed by the government, and for which ſo many individuals had already ſuffered in France. Having requeſted the executioner not to apply any bandage before his eyes, he paſſed a ſhort time in prayer, and then ſubmitted to his ſentence. De Thou, who is more conciſe in his narration, agrees in every important particular, with D'Aubigné, and condemns the injuſtice of the trial and execution.

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heard the reaſons for his conduct, ordered his equipage and ſervants to be honorably conducted to their maſter. A body of near four hundred horſe purſued, and overtook the fugitive prince, who had paſſed the Poliſh limits, and was no longer in danger of being re-conducted as a captive to his own palace. Count Tenczyn, at the head of a ſmall number of gentlemen, advancing, unarmed, towards him, endeavoured by exhortations and entreaties to induce him to return to Cracow. Henry received theſe marks of affection, with ſimilar demonſtrations of regard; promiſed to reviſit Poland, after having reſtored tranquillity to France; aſſigned the reaſons which had neceſſitated him to withdraw from a country and people, for whom he ſhould always preſerve the moſt lively attachment; and continued his journey to Vienna [27].

His reception by the emperor Maximilian.

The circumſtances of his flight, which were in ſome meaſure, ignominious, when contraſted with thoſe of his elevation to the throne of the ſame kingdom, only a few months preceding, were ſpeedily effaced from his mind, by the reception which he met with in the Imperial court. Maximilian the Second treated him with every mark of deference and honor; advanced to meet him with a ſplendid retinue; and detained him ſome days, in his capital, among feſtivities and entertainments. That beneficent, and enlightened monarch, whoſe maxims of toleration rendered his reign happy and proſperous; ſtrenuouſly exhorted Henry, on his return to France, to adopt ſimilar principles of government. He adviſed gentle meaſures towards the Hugonots, and beſought of him, to commemorate the æra of his entry into his hereditary dominions, by giving peace to his ſubjects, of every perſuaſion. Theſe arguments and entreaties, Maximilian enforced by the example of his own, and of his father, Ferdinand's experience; who, after many ineffectual efforts to reduce the Germans by violence, had found, that in matters of faith, war, far from curing, only aggravated the evil. It would have been fortunate for

[27] Solignac, Hiſt. de Pologne, vol. v. p. 453—473. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 72—76. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 140 and 141.

Henry

Henry and his people, if the remonſtrances of the emperor, had influenced his future conduct [28].

1574. Magnificent treatment of Henry at Venice.

Unwilling to paſs through the territories of the elector palatine, from whom he had received ſo ſignal and humiliating an affront, on his former progreſs to Poland; the king determined on taking his courſe through Lombardy. The magnificence with which the Republic of Venice honored his approach and arrival, far exceeded that which any other European ſtate could exert, in the ſixteenth century. From the inſtant that he entered the Venetian territories, to the moment of his final departure, every variety of ſuperb and diverſified amuſement, was laviſhed, to gratify their royal gueſt. That celebrated Commonwealth, though paſt its meridian, was ſtill the center of commerce, arts, and luxury. Its peculiar ſituation among the waves of the Adriatic, enabled the Senate to exhibit a ſpecies of pomp and ſplendor, not to be found in any other capital. During nine days which Henry paſſed in Venice, he beheld a perpetual ſucceſſion of ſhews, games, and recreations. Triumphal arches, raiſed on the deſigns of Palladio: combats, naval and military: illuminations, and balls, where the Venetian ladies, equally celebrated for their charms and their gallantry, endeavoured to captivate the young monarch: theſe varied pleaſures, which the policy of the Republic offered to its antient and moſt powerful ally, detained him, notwithſtanding the preſſing exhortations of Catherine, his mother, to haſten his return [29].

27th July. Quitting with reluctance a city, which contained ſo many attractions, and accompanied by the dukes of Savoy, Mantua, and Ferrara, he proceeded towards Turin; remounted the river Po, and arrived

24th Auguſt. His arrival at Turin. in that capital, after having declined to viſit Milan, where Don John of Auſtria commanded for the king of Spain.

State of France. France, during his ab-

[28] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 76. Solignac, vol. v. p. 473—476. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 141 and 142.

[29] Hiſt. de Venice, par Laugier, vol. x. p. 293—307. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 78—81.

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fence, had been torn by almoſt every calamity, incident to a ſtate where religion ſerved as a pretext, to conceal the projects of faction and ambition. In Poitou, the ſuſpenſion of arms, which had been concluded by the regent, was violated on her part; and the royal forces, under the duke of Montpenſier, profiting of the ſecurity of the Hugonots, after having captured Fontenay, menaced Rochelle itſelf. Damville, after long irreſolution, iſſued a proclamation, avowing his junction with the Proteſtants; while, on the other hand, the prince of Condé publiſhed a manifeſto, from Heidelberg, in the Palatinate, accuſing the evil counſellors of the crown, with having produced the diſorders under which the kingdom laboured. He preceded it, by letters addreſſed to the delegates, aſſembled at Milhaud, in which he demanded ſupplies of money, and promiſed to conduct to their aſſiſtance a military force. They, in return, elected him for their chief, though with very limited powers, of every kind. Throughout Languedoc, Guyenne, and Bearn, the Proteſtants were, univerſally, in arms: but, in Dauphiné, where Montbrun commanded againſt the royal army, hoſtilities were carried on with the greateſt violence [30].

Catherine advances to Lyons.

Auguſt.

In the midſt of ſuch complicated national misfortunes, which the regent fomented by her inſidious and treacherous policy; that princeſs, after having cauſed the obſequies of the late king to be performed, quitted Paris, accompanied by her two priſoners, the duke of Alenſon, and the king of Navarre. Paſſing through the province of Burgundy, ſhe reviewed in perſon a body of ſix thouſand Switzers, whom ſhe had cauſed to be levied, and arrived at Lyons, where ſhe impatiently expected the return of her favorite ſon [31].

Political intrigues at Turin.

The court of Turin, during the ſhort reſidence which Henry made in it, was become the center of political intrigue and cabal. Margaret, ducheſs of Savoy, daughter of Francis the Firſt, one of the moſt accompliſhed princeſſes of the age, endeavoured to enforce the

[30] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 138—140. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 85—95.

[31] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 95. Davila, p. 418.

exhorta-

exhortations, made to him at Vienna, by the emperor Maximilian; and ſhe attempted, in conjunction with the duke, her huſband, Emanuel Philibert, to reconcile him with the family of Montmorenci. Damville himſelf, whoſe loyalty and attachment to the crown had been ſhaken, but, not effaced, by the perſecution of Catherine of Medecis; and who hoped to regain the intereſt which he had formerly poſſeſſed in Henry's eſteem; ventured, under the engagement of the duke of Savoy, for his protection, to repair in perſon, to Turin. The king received him with demonſtrations of affection. Bellegarde, who occupied a diſtinguiſhed place in the royal favour, and Pibrac, joined their efforts to thoſe of Damville, and appeared to have made a deep impreſſion on the mind of the king. But, theſe auſpicious beginnings were ſoon ſubverted and changed by the emiſſaries of the regent, who not only induced Henry to ſuſpend every meaſure tending towards peace; but, inſtilled ſuſpicions of Damville's fidelity. That nobleman, alarmed at the viſible alteration in his ſovereign's behaviour, and apprehenſive of being arreſted, left Turin with precipitation, and returned to his government of Languedoc, where he immediately ſigned an agreement with the Proteſtants [32].

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Emanuel Philibert, though he had failed in this attempt, was ſucceſsful in another, which, as a ſovereign prince, affected him far more deeply, and perſonally. Of the numerous garriſons, and extenſive conqueſts, acquired by Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, in Savoy and Piedmont, only Pignerol, Savillan, and the valley of Perouſe, remained to France. All the others had been reſtored to the duke, by the treaty of peace, in 1559. The poſſeſſion of theſe fortreſſes, not only gave to the French kings a facility of penetrating at pleaſure into Italy, by the paſſages of the Alps; but, from their vicinity to Turin itſelf, held the dukes of Savoy in awe, and kept them in a ſtate of perpetual dependance. Every motive of ſound policy dictated to preſerve them with jealous attention. But, Henry,

Schemes of the duke of Savoy.

[32] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 131 and 132. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 144 and 145.

gained

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gained by the careſſes of Emanuel Philibert, and neglectful of the true intereſts of his crown, was prevailed on to promiſe their reſtitution[33].

1574. Arrival of Henry at Lyons.

The king ſoon afterwards quitted Turin, and proceeded towards the frontiers of his own dominions, attended by the duke of Savoy, at the head of his troops. This eſcort was not merely honorary, as the province of Dauphiné was infeſted by the Hugonot forces, who committed perpetual depredations, on the confines of the two ſtates.

5th Sept. At the "Pont de Beauvoiſin," where France and Savoy divide, he was met by the duke of Alenſon and the king of Navarre, whom he received with marks of apparent civility and affection. On the following day, the interview between himſelf and his mother, took place; and the new king, accompanied by Catherine, and a vaſt train, made a public and magnificent entry into the city of Lyons[34].

[33] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 145. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 132 and 133. Davila, p. 419.
[34] Davila, p. 420. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 133 and 134. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 146 and 147.

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Condition of the kingdom, and of parties, at Henry's aſſumption of the government.—Continuation of the war againſt the Proteſtants.—Reſtitution of Pignerol, Savillan, and Perouſe, to Savoy.—Journey of the court to Avignon.—Death of the cardinal of Lorrain.—Inauguration, and marriage of the king.—Capture, and execution of Montbrun.—Inactivity, and vices of Henry.—Eſcape of the duke of Alenſon.—Defeat of Thoré.—Truce with Alenſon.—Entry of the German army into France.—Flight of the king of Navarre.—Negociation, and concluſion of peace.—Foreign affairs.—State of Flanders.—Election of Stephen Battori, to the crown of Poland.—Death of Maximilian the Second.—Aſpect of Europe.

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1574. September.

HENRY the Third, at the period of his return to France, was in the flower of youth, having ſcarcely attained his twenty-third year. His figure was graceful and elegant: an air of majeſty, tempered by ſweetneſs, accompanied all his actions; and his eloquence was dignified, captivating, and calculated to perſuade. He had been educated in habits of diſſimulation, and initiated in his earlieſt years, to the fatigues of a camp. The reputation, which he had acquired by the victories of Jarnac, and of Montcontour, for which he was principally indebted to marſhal Tavannes, his governor; had conduced in no ſmall degree, to elevate him to the Poliſh throne. Europe expected from him, as he attained to manhood, a diſplay of martial talents, and hardy virtue. He had been privy to, and active in al the counſels, which preceded the maſſacre of Paris, where he betrayed the moſt unrelenting barbarity towards the Hugonots. The ſhort period of his ſtay in Poland, had not allowed time for the exerciſe of any

Character, and qualities of the new king.

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any distinguished qualities; and the circumstances of his flight from that country, though inglorious, were, in some measure, excused, or palliated, by the necessity of his immediate appearance in France.

Situation of France.

The situation of the kingdom, to which he was called by the decease of Charles the Ninth, though critical and alarming, was by no means desperate. Two powerful factions, irritated almost to frenzy against each other, by a long series of mutual injuries, violence, and war, persisted to maintain a desperate conflict. Religion added new incentives to their animosity, and aggravated the sources of discord. But, the leaders, on either side, continued to profess obedience to their common sovereign: the majesty of the throne, though defaced and violated, was not subverted; and the wounds which had been inflicted on the state, however deep and recent, admitted of a cure. Two great, and opposite lines of conduct, presented themselves for Henry's choice: either to signalize his accession by giving peace to his subjects; or, to continue the war, already begun, to the subjection and extermination of the Hugonots. Every inducement of humanity, wisdom, and policy, seemed to dictate the former measure. He had already evinced a disposition towards it; and its accomplishment must have been attended with consequences equally beneficial to his people, and happy for himself. But, the fatal counsels of his mother; the intolerant spirit of the age, which knew no limit to persecution; the desire of signalizing his zeal against those enemies, whom he had opposed and vanquished in his early youth; and the hope of triumphing over, and finally extinguishing both the Catholic and Protestant factions, when weakened by their dissentions: these fallacious reasonings determined him, after some hesitation, to command hostilities [1].

Vices, and defects of Henry.

From this improvident and ruinous step, originated all the subsequent misfortunes of his reign; and every part of his conduct evinced

[1] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 136—152. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 153. Davila, p. 420—426. D'Aubigné, Hist. Univ. vol. ii. p. 132 and 133.

to

to the nation, that effeminacy, indolence, and luxury, had enervated his mind. Inſtead of acting with vigor to reform the abuſes, which, under ſhelter of the commotions of the late government, had invaded the different departments; he had no ſooner arrived in his dominions, than he reſigned himſelf to inactivity. An enemy to fatigue, and incapable of application, he neglected all affairs of moment: ſurrounded only by paraſites and favorites; difficult of acceſs; entrenched in ceremonies and parade; or negligently reclined in a barge, richly decorated, on the river Soane, he appeared to have forgotten every duty annexed to his ſtation. It was not poſſible to recognize the prince, who had been educated in the field, and trained to the hardſhips of a military life. The nobility, and the veteran officers of his army, diſguſted at a change ſo unexpected, forſook the court, which became deſert; and all the expectations to which Henry had given birth, when preſumptive heir to the crown, diſappeared from the inſtant of his acceſſion [2]. CHAP. II. 1574.

Reſtoration of Pignerol and Savillan.

The contempt and alienation which ſo indecent a conduct excited among his ſubjects, were not diminiſhed by the accompliſhment of his engagement to the duke of Savoy, in reſtoring to him Pignerol, Savillan, and the valley of Perouſe. Henry, more, as his enemies aſſerted, from facility and prodigality, than from any ſentiment of equity or juſtice, ordered the immediate evacuation of thoſe garriſons. All the remonſtrances of the duke of Nevers, to whoſe government they had been confided; joined to the oppoſition of his wiſeſt miniſters, were ineffectual [3]. Emanuel Philibert repaid the generoſity of the king, with neglect; and, liberated from ſo formidable a neighbour, aſſumed a higher tone in all his negotiations with France. It ſeemed as if the new ſovereign, not content with the omiſſion of the great duties exacted from him, deſired to diminiſh the power, and to contract the limits of his dominions [4].

[2] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 134 and 135. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 150.

[3] Memoires du Duc de Nevers, folio, Paris, 1665, vol. i. p. 3—26, and p. 33—68..

[4] Davila, p. 419. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 154—157. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 151 and 152.

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1574. Renewal of the civil war.

While Henry, at the commencement of his reign, thus ſacrificed his own dignity and the eſteem of his people, the kingdom became a prey to civil war. In Poitou, the duke of Montpenſier, after a long ſiege, made himſelf maſter of Luſignan, and demoliſhed that celebrated fortreſs. But, in the vicinity of Lyons, the Hugonots, unreſtrained by any reſpect for the perſon of their ſovereign, committed depredations with impunity, and refuſed to pay obedience to the royal mandate, enjoining them to lay down their arms. Montbrun, their commander, who had pillaged the baggage of Henry, on its paſſage from Savoy, treated with neglect his injunction to retire to his own home. Bellegarde, to whom the command of the Catholic forces had been committed, was repulſed in an aſſault upon the little town of Livron in Dauphiné; and every circumſtance ſeemed to combine, to mark the æra of Henry's return to France, with ignominy and misfortune [5].

Diſſipation of the court.

As if inſenſible to the national diſtreſs, the court, during theſe occurrences, was plunged in diſſipation, and immerſed in pleaſures. Catherine of Medecis encouraged the propenſity of her ſon to profuſion and indolence, with a view to engroſs a larger portion of authority, and to render her interpoſition more neceſſary. Indifferent as to the means by which ſhe accompliſhed her objects, and reſtrained by no principles of virtue in their proſecution, ſhe made gallantry ſubſervient to all her projects. The ladies of her houſhold, initiated in the myſteries of their ſovereign, aided and facilitated her views, by ſacrificing their honor, at her command; and ſhe endeavoured to ſoften the captivity of the duke Alenſon and the king of Navarre, who were ſtill detained in an honorable confinement, by ſtimulating their paſſions, or fomenting their jealouſy, as circumſtances ſeemed to dictate.

Attachment of Henry, to Mary of Cleves,

The king himſelf, divided between various candidates for his affection, had determined to eſpouſe Mary of Cleves, princeſs of Condé,

[5] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 153 and 154. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 159—164.

of whom, while duke of Anjou, he had been enamoured. The indecorum, if not criminality, of ſuch a choice, and the obſtacle interpoſed by her marriage, were diſregarded in the violence of his attachment. Religion afforded a favourable pretext for procuring a divorce; the princeſs having adhered to the Catholic faith, ſince the maſſacre of Paris. All the exertions of the queen-mother; terrified at the aſcendant which a beautiful and accompliſhed woman, raiſed to the throne, might have retained over her ſon; would have been ineffectual to prevent its accompliſhment, if death had not interpoſed. The princeſs was carried off by a ſudden and violent diſtemper, which naturally excited ſuſpicions, in an age and court, to which the uſe of poiſons was familiar. Henry appeared to be inconſolable for this event: but, after betraying the moſt extravagant ſymptoms of grief, he, with equal rapidity paſſed to the contrary extreme, and even attempted to attribute to the effect of enchantment, his paſſion and emotions for the death of his miſtreſs [6].

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Under the pretence of opening a negotiation with marſhal Damville, governor of Languedoc, which would be rendered more practicable by approaching the confines of the province, Catherine ſoon afterwards induced the king to transfer his reſidence from Lyons to Avignon. During his ſtay in that city, which being a dependancy of the papal ſee, naturally preſented continual ſcenes of devotion and ſuperſtition, Henry firſt ſaw, and was deeply impreſſed by proceſſions of penitents, or flagellants, who publickly inflicted on themſelves the ſevereſt diſcipline. The inſtitution had originated about a century preceding, among the fervid and fantaſtic imaginations of the Italians, and had not yet penetrated into France. The king, who with effeminacy, and many of the vices moſt contrary to morals, had, notwithſtanding, a decided inclination for that factitious piety, which conſiſts in external ceremonies; eagerly caught at the ſhadow of religion; and

Inſtitution of the penitents.

[6] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 155.

partly

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partly from inclination, partly from policy, aſſiſted in perſon, followed by all his courtiers, at the proceſſions of Avignon [7].

1574. December. Death of the cardinal of Lorrain.

This devout extravagance proved fatal to the cardinal of Lorrain, who was carried off, by a violent fever, occaſioned by his attendance, barefooted, on one of the ceremonies of the penitents. Notwithſtanding the variety and ſplendor of his talents, he was neither lamented by the king, nor regretted by the nation. His arrogance in proſperity; the violence of his ambition; and the puſillanimity of his conduct under circumſtances of danger, or depreſſion: theſe defects and vices had impeded the greatneſs of his family, and rendered him generally unpopular. Even the clergy, to whoſe intereſts he ſeemed to have been ſo much devoted, regarded him as the enemy of their order; and accuſed him of having ſacrificed the revenues of the church, to his deſire of acquiring, or retaining the favor of the crown. He was quickly forgotten in a court, engroſſed only by diſſipation [8].

1575.

Wearied with ineffectual efforts to conclude an accommodation with Damville, who, on his guard againſt the inſidious artifices of the queen-mother, refuſed to accede to her propoſitions; Henry at length quitted Avignon, and began his journey back to Lyons. The Proteſtants, in poſſeſſion of many places on either ſide of the Rhone, and not intimidated by his approach, defended themſelves with equal courage and ſucceſs. His preſence in the camp before Livron, an inconſiderable town of Dauphiné, and the efforts made by the troops, under the eye of the king, to render themſelves maſters of it, only produced an aggravation of diſgrace. They were repulſed; and the Hugonots, elated with ſo ſignal an advantage, outraged their ſovereign, from the wall, by the moſt inſolent and poignant reproaches. They even purſued the royal army in its retreat, cut in pieces the Switzers, and did not ſpare the ſick, who had been left behind in the camp [9].

Royal forces, repulſed before Livron. January.

[7] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 164 and 165. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 156.
[8] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 155 and 156. Davila, p. 427. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 165—7.
[9] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 246.

Under

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Under ſuch an accumulation of ignominy, Henry proceeded towards Rheims, where the ceremony of his inauguration was performed with the accuſtomed magnificence. On the following day, his nuptials were ſolemnized with Louiſa, daughter of Nicholas, count of Vaudemont, a prince of the houſe of Lorrain. The king, and court, plunged in exceſſes of every kind, appeared to have forgotten that the country was deſolated by civil war. Prodigality compleated the ruin of the finances; and even an inſurrection in the garriſon of Metz, one of the moſt important frontier poſſeſſions of France, could not rouſe to exertion a prince, ſunk in ſloth and luxury [10].

1575
15th Feb. Inauguration of Henry. His nuptials.

Long and ineffectual conferences were held, after Henry's return to the capital, between the delegates of the moderate Catholics, who acknowledged Damville as their head, and the emiſſaries of the prince of Condé as chief of the Hugonots, acting together on one ſide; and on the other, the council of ſtate, at which the king himſelf was preſent, and aſſiſted. No beneficial conſequence reſulted from their deliberations, which only produced new delays, and mutual diſtruſt. In almoſt all the provinces, hoſtilities were commenced, and carried on with augmented violence: though not attended with any deciſive conſequence to either party, yet the principal advantages were gained by the Proteſtants. The city of Perigueux was taken and abandoned to pillage, by Langoiran, one of their commanders; while Damville extended his acquiſitions in Languedoc. Montbrun, who had long been the terror of the Catholics in Dauphiné, and who had recently defeated their general in an engagement, felt in his turn the mutability of fortune. Having purſued with too much precipitation, a body of Catholic forces; his troops, imprudently occupied in pillage, were attacked by the enemy, who had rallied. He himſelf, after having performed every duty of a veteran and intrepid leader, was

Ineffectual conferences for peace.

May.

Defeat of Montbrun.

[10] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 157. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 248—250. Davila, p. 428.

compelled

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1575. July.

compelled in turn to retreat; and his horſe falling under him, his thigh was fractured. In this ſituation, he ſurrendered priſoner of war, upon aſſurances of protection for his life. But, the court, mindful of the indignities received from him, anxious to inflict an exemplary puniſhment on ſo diſtinguiſhed an officer, and little attentive to the obſervation of any engagements; cauſed him to be interrogated before judges, like an ordinary criminal, accuſed of treaſon. He was condemned to die; and the ſentence was accelerated, from an apprehenſion of his eſcaping by a natural death, in conſequence of his fracture. When conducted to the ſcaffold, although debilitated in body, and ſcarcely capable of ſuſtaining himſelf, he exerted the moſt chearful and compoſed fortitude; harangued the ſpectators, and ſubmitted to his fate without a murmur. Like Montgomery, he was ſacrificed to the vengeance of the court; but, his execution, far from intimidating the Hugonots, only exaſperated them to new exertions. Leſdiguieres, at that time, in early youth, and who afterwards roſe by merit and talents, to the high dignity of conſtable of France, ſucceeded to Montbrun's credit and command. By the ſeverity of his diſcipline, he ſoon rendered his troops more formidable, and maintained his ſuperiority over the royal arms in Dauphiné [11].

His execution.

While

[11] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 268—272. Davila, p. 428 and 429. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 133—137.

The leading circumſtances of Montbrun's capture and execution, are found in De Thou, and confirmed by D'Aubigné. Every exertion was made to obtain his pardon, or, at leaſt, that he might be treated as a priſoner of war. The prince of Condé, and Damville, ſent deputies to intercede, and to remonſtrate in his favor. Even the duke of Guiſe, whoſe powerful intereſt might have ſaved any other criminal, and who wiſhed to exchange him againſt Beſme, the aſſaſſin of Coligni, then in the hands of the Hugonots, could not prevail. The queen-mother, and Henry were inexorable. Montbrun had been the firſt ſubject, who had dared to take up arms againſt the crown: he had put to death numbers of Catholics; and when he had recently plundered the royal baggage, he accompanied the act with a ſarcaſtic obſervation, that "war and play rendered all conditions equal." The court was alarmed leſt a natural death, in conſequence of his accident from the fracture of his thigh, ſhould rob them of their prey. His trial was indecently precipitated by the parliament of Grenoble. There is a ſtriking ſimilarity in the particulars of his death, to thoſe which accompanied Montgomery's execution. Though extenu-

While theſe ſcenes of bloodſhed and violence were acted in the different provinces of the kingdom, Henry, regardleſs of his own character, or of the public ſecurity, gave full ſcope to all his weaknefſes and vices. Reſigned to the dominion of rapacious favorites, to whom the people juſtly applied the odious denomination of minions, his profuſion in heaping honors and emoluments on them, knew no limits. The moſt unmanly pleaſures occupied his time, and left him neither leiſure, nor inclination, for public buſineſs. Perpetual rivalities between the favorites of the king, and thoſe of his brother, the duke of Alenſon, transformed the palace into a theatre of quarrel, outrage, and diſſention. Intrigues of policy and gallantry formed the only objects of ſerious attention. The duke of Guiſe, who had already conceived thoſe projects of elevation, which he afterwards executed, ſtimulated the young queen to render herſelf miſtreſs of her huſband, and to aſpire to the guidance of the ſtate: but, Louiſa did not poſſeſs ſufficient energy and talents, to ſucceed in ſuch an attempt. Educated in principles of an auſtere and melancholy devotion, ſhe poſſeſſed few mental endowments, calculated to retain the affections of a diſſolute and capricious prince. Her modeſty and virtue ſecured the eſteem, but, never enabled her to acquire any aſcendant over the mind of Henry. The queen-mother, with her uſual diſſimulation, fomented the jealouſy, which from perſonal, as well as political cauſes, continually took place between the duke of Alenſon and the king of Navarre. Thoſe princes were ſtill detained in a ſort of confinement; and the court, careleſs of every external concern, was immerſed in plea-

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1575. Indifference and effeminacy of Henry.

extenuated, and weakened to a great degree, his fortitude was unſhaken on the ſcaffold; and he ventured, in defiance of every prohibition, to harangue the people. He proteſted his innocence of rebellion, declared his ſatisfaction in laying down his life for the cauſe of religion; and ſtretched out his head to the executioner. The Hugonots ſeverely revenged his death on the Catholics, in the vicinity of Grenoble. De Thou ſtrongly condemns the ſpirit of vengeance, by which the court was actuated on this occaſion.

 ſures,

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ſures, when an unexpected and alarming incident rouſed the king to a temporary exertion [12].

1575. Eſcape of the duke of Alenſon.

Francis, duke of Alenſon, had hitherto been reſtrained from any effort to withdraw himſelf, or to form a party in oppoſition to the crown, by various motives. The expectation of his election to the Poliſh throne, which had been firſt held out to his ambition, had already proved fallacious; and the poſt to which he aſpired of lieutenant-general of the kingdom, was too powerful and dangerous, to be conferred on any ſubject. Tired with fruitleſs ſolicitations; inſulted by the minions of the king, who paid little regard to his dignity; and ſtimulated by his own adherents, who hoped to acquire conſideration from their maſter's freedom; he determined to quit a court and capital, where he was ſubjected to continual mortifications. 15th Sept. Having, on pretence of an affair of gallantry, gone into the ſuburbs, he inſtantly mounted on horſeback; and, before the intelligence of his flight was publickly known, he reached the city of Dreux, on the confines of Normandy; from whence he iſſued a manifeſto, calculated to conciliate the popular favor. It enumerated the grievances under which the nation ſuffered; reprobated the number and ſeverity of the pecuniary impoſitions; ſtated the neceſſity of a reform in the government, and finiſhed by demanding an aſſembly of the ſtates general [13].

Conſternation occaſioned by it.

The conſternation of the court, on this event, was equal to the ſecurity, by which it had been preceded. Henry, awaking from the lethargy in which he had been plunged, ſent the duke of Nevers, at the head of a body of troops, to purſue his brother; commanded the poſts in the vicinity of Paris to be occupied; and made every preparation for defence. Meanwhile, the duke of Alenſon, having con-

[12] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 161—163.

[13] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 82—86, and p. 92—94. Davila, p. 431—433. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 285—288. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 176—179. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 163-4.

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CHAP. II. 1577.

tinued his retreat, was met in Poitou, by many of the Hugonot chiefs, who expected protection and ſupport from his junction with their party; and the conſequences to the government were rendered more ſerious, by the certainty of the approach of a German army, conducted by the prince of Condé in perſon, which was ready to enter the kingdom. Terrified at ſuch a proſpect, deſtitute of reſources, and ever ready from the impulſe of his natural diſpoſition, to have recourſe to temporizing meaſures; the king, by the advice of his mother, opened a negociation for peace. Catherine, anxious to prevent hoſtilities between her two ſons, and at the ſame time to render her interpoſition neceſſary; undertook to go in queſt of the duke of Alenſon, and to diſpoſe his mind towards a reconciliation. In order to facilitate ſo delicate and arduous a work, ſhe began by liberating the two marſhals, Montmorenci and Coſſé, who had languiſhed in the Baſtile ſince the concluſion of the late reign. Their influence with the duke of Alenſon was great; and his manifeſto had demanded in ſpecific terms, their emancipation from an unjuſt and cruel captivity. Accompanied by thoſe noblemen, ſhe immediately quitted Paris, and ſet out on her journey towards Champigny, in Touraine, the place, appointed to manage a conference [14].

Efforts of the Queen Dowager, to prevent a war.

A conſiderable detachment from the army of the prince of Condé, commanded by Thoré, one of the younger ſons of the conſtable Montmorenci, had already paſſed the Rhine, entered France, and advanced to the banks of the river Marne, on its march to join the duke of Alenſon. At the town of Dormans in Champagne, the royal forces, commanded by the duke of Guiſe in perſon, attempted to oppoſe their further progreſs; and as their numbers were greatly ſuperior to thoſe of Thoré, it ſeemed to be imprudent in him to hazard an action. But, that nobleman, confiding in the bravery of his troops, did not decline the combat. After a long and deſperate engagement,

Combat of Dormans.

November.

[14] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 287—292. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 178. Davila, p. 434. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 92—99.

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gagement, he was defeated; the Germans, who compoſed a principal part of his force, were cut to pieces; and he himſelf, at the head of a few cavalry, eſcaped with difficulty. The victory on the other ſide, was not purchaſed without bloodſhed; and the duke of Guiſe himſelf, in the purſuit, received a wound in the cheek from a private ſoldier, the ſcar of which he always retained, and which ſerved as an honorable teſtimony to the people, of his zeal in the defence of the Catholic religion[15].

Truce concluded.

Notwithſtanding ſo ſevere a check, the duke of Alenſon did not evince any eagerneſs to accept the terms offered him by Catherine, or to conclude an accommodation. The queen-mother, after ineffectually exerting every endeavour for the purpoſe, was reduced to the neceſſity of agreeing to a truce for ſix months between the two parties. Nor did Henry purchaſe even the ſhort and precarious ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities for ſo limited a period, without great conceſſions: the ſtipulation of payment for the Germans levied by the prince of Condé; places of ſecurity for the Hugonots; and a body of troops for the guard of the duke of Alenſon. On theſe conditions, the truce was at length publiſhed by that prince in his camp, and acquieſced in by his Proteſtant allies[16]. It was evident, that, on the part of the king, as neceſſity alone had dictated ſo humiliating an agreement, there was no ſerious intention of carrying it into effect. Pretences were found for delaying, or evading ſome of the ſtipulations; and the governors of the places, which were to be ſurrendered to the confederates, encouraged by the court, refuſed to comply with the orders iſſued for their evacuation. Henry made preparations for war, and ordered a levy of ſix thouſand Switzers to be inſtantly commenced. But, when he attempted to exact pecuniary ſupplies from the inhabitants of Paris, and convoked

22d Decem.

Artifices of the court.

[15] Davila, p. 435 and 436. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 292—295. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 179—183.

[16] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 295. Davila, p. 437. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 99—104.

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an aſſembly for the immediate object of raiſing them, he received a peremptory refuſal. The parliament, clergy, and citizens of the capital, in the language of a free and indignant people, repreſented without diſguiſe, and in the preſence of the king, the abuſes, malverſations, and profuſion, by which the treaſury had been drained, and the country exhauſted. Henry, far from puniſhing, did not even venture to mark his reſentment at ſo bold a remonſtrance; and having diſmiſſed the aſſembly, he prepared to ſupport the hoſtilities againſt his brother, from other, and more eaſy modes of contribution [17]. CHAP. II. 1575.

1576. Entrance of the Germans into France. January.

The German army, led by John Caſimir, ſon to the elector Palatine, and the prince of Condé, which had ſo long hovered on the borders of the kingdom, at length began its march. Their numbers exceeded eighteen thouſand; and as the royal forces, commanded, in the abſence of the duke of Guiſe, by his brother the duke of Mayenne, were far inferior, no obſtacle was interpoſed, effectually to impede their entry and progreſs into the interior provinces. Having paſſed through Lorrain and Burgundy almoſt unoppoſed, they croſſed the Loire, and effected their junction near Moulins in the Bourbonnois, with the duke of Alenſon. Previous to this event, Henry, king of Navarre, wearied with a confinement of near four years in the court of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third; diſappointed in every hope of employment; odious to the queen-mother; and forgotten, or neglected by the king himſelf; took the reſolution of eſcaping from his captivity. Having deceived his guards, while engaged in hunting, he paſſed the Seine without delay, accompanied only by his choſen friends; arrived ſafely at Vendome; and having reſumed the exerciſe of the Proteſtant religion, continued his retreat towards Guienne, of which province he was governor [18].

Flight of the king of Navarre.

23d Feb.

Mean-

[17] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 296—299.

[18] D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 183—189. Davila, p. 438—440. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 169. D'Aubigné, Memoires, p. 49—52.

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1576. State of the confederates.

Meanwhile, the chiefs of the confederate army, who unanimouſly acknowledged the duke of Alenſon for their ſupreme head, aſſembled at Moulins, and preſented articles to the king, on the acceptance of which, they profeſſed a readineſs to lay down their arms. Henry received their deputies with marks of regard, and promiſed a ſpeedy anſwer to their demands. Notwithſtanding the formidable nature of their forces, and the defenceleſs ſituation of the crown, many cauſes conduced to render their operations weak and languid. The German forces, ill paid and mutinous, were with difficulty retained under their ſtandards, and inſolently threatened to exact by force, their arrears. The leaders of the combined forces were of different nations, religions, and intereſts. Mutual jealouſy and diſtruſt prevailed among them; and the prince of Condé, who had with equal danger and ſucceſs, conducted ſo large a body of foreign troops into the center of

The moſt minute relation of the eſcape and flight of the king of Navarre, is to be found in D'Aubigné, who has violated his cuſtomary brevity, in order to commemorate every circumſtance which preceded and accompanied an event, ſo deciſive in its conſequences, and ſo hazardous in its execution. Six perſons only were privy to it, who ſwore inviolable ſecrecy; and the king of Navarre, by affecting to believe that he ſhould be conſtituted lieutenant general of France, confirmed the ſecurity of the court. On the evening preceding the day upon which he effected his eſcape, Fervaques, one of the ſix perſons entruſted with the deſign, revealed it to Henry the Third. D'Aubigné having been preſent, and ſuſpecting the treachery of his aſſociate, charged him with it; and on his avowing it, inſtantly carried the intelligence to his maſter. The king of Navarre, after a day paſſed in hunting, accompanied by two gentlemen, his guards, who never quitted him; was at the town of Senlis, ten leagues diſtant from Paris. On receiving the information from d'Aubigné, that his intention was diſcovered, he inſtantly took a deciſive reſolution. Accompanied by a few adherents, he mounted on horſeback, and having deceived his guards by an ingenious fiction, gained the banks of the Seine, which he paſſed near Poiſſi, on the following morning. Arriving, after numberleſs perils, at Alenſon, he was there ſpeedily joined by near two hundred and fifty gentlemen. Among theſe was Fervaques himſelf; who being warned by Grillon, that Henry the Third, notwithſtanding the recent ſervice which he had performed, was irritated againſt him, and had even determined to put him to death, as an accompliice with the king of Navarre; immediately contrived to leave Paris. As an excuſe for his perfidy, he aſſerted that Madame de Carnavalet had previouſly revealed to Henry the Third, the plan concerted for the king of Navarre's eſcape; and his apology was admitted. D'Aubigné expreſsly ſays, that the ſoldiers, who guarded the king of Navarre in the Louvre, were placed about him by Catherine of Medecis herſelf; that they were zealous Catholics, and had, almoſt all of them, been active in the maſſacre of Paris.

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the kingdom, ſaw himſelf ſupplanted by the duke of Alenſon. The recent eſcape of the king of Navarre, introduced a new competitor, and encreaſed the colliſion of oppoſite claims for pre-eminence. It became impoſſible to act with union and energy to one object; and the court availed itſelf of theſe circumſtances. The duke of Alenſon betrayed the ſtrongeſt diſpoſition to ſacrifice his allies, to the acquiſition of perſonal power; and the queen-mother, anxious to withdraw him from his new friends, gratified him on that favorite point. After a number of delays, the treaty of pacification was finally concluded by Catherine, and ſoon afterwards ſolemnly ratified by the king in perſon. It was, in almoſt all the articles, ignominious to the crown, and advantageous to the confederates [19].

1576.

Concluſion of peace. 14th May.

The eſtabliſhment of the duke of Alenſon was augmented by the addition of three of the richeſt provinces of France, Berry, Touraine, and Anjou: he himſelf aſſumed from that period, the title of duke of Anjou. Eight cities, in different parts of the kingdom, were ceded to the Proteſtants, for their ſecurity: every immunity or privilege, civil and religious, which could place them on an equality with the Catholics, was granted them: freedom of worſhip, the right of celebrating marriage, and of holding, under certain regulations, ſynods, or conſiſtories, were conceded. The king not only reverſed the attainders againſt Coligni, Montgomery, Montbrun, and their adherents; but, he renounced on his own part, all participation in, or approbation of, the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. Penſions and rewards were conferred on John Caſimir, who had raiſed the army which enabled the confederates to dictate to the crown; and a convocation of the ſtates general was ſtipulated to be held within ſix months, in order to repreſent the grievances of the people, and to apply adequate remedies [20].

Conditions of it.

[19] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 117—135.

[20] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 169—174. Davila, p. 442—445. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 416—418. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 215.

While

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While Henry, by a peace, which degraded his own dignity, and excited the indignation of his Catholic ſubjects, obtained a reſpite from his enemies; the Spaniſh provinces in the Netherlands exhibited a ſcene of anarchy and deſolation, ſcarcely paralleled in hiſtory. Requeſens, after a ſhort and troubleſome adminiſtration, diſtinguiſhed by his unremitting, but, unſucceſsful exertions, to reſtore order throughout the Low Countries, had been carried off by a violent diſtemper. His gentle and conciliating character might, probably, have revived the allegiance of the Flemings for Philip the Second, if all poſſibility of reconciliation had not been precluded by the cruelties of his predeceſſor, the duke of Alva. The ſudden and unexpected nature of Requeſens' death, left him no time to execute the orders of the court of Madrid, in the nomination of a ſucceſſor. In this defect of any legal governor, the council of ſtate aſſumed the ſupreme authority, which was afterwards confirmed by the king of Spain. But, the revolt of the Spaniſh troops; their ſeizure of Aloſt; and the multiplied acts of outrage and violence, committed by them on the people, rendered any attempt to conciliate the minds of men impracticable. The ſack of Antwerp, juſtly eſteemed at that period, the moſt wealthy and commercial city in Europe, completed the calamities of Flanders, and drove the ſtates of the province to the final neceſſity of uniting with thoſe of Holland and Zealand, for their common protection. By the celebrated league, denominated the Pacification of Ghent, they agreed to make war upon the Spaniards, till they ſhould be entirely driven out of the Netherlands. This treaty was notwithſtanding made, and publiſhed in the name of Philip, from whom the ſtates of Flanders had not withdrawn their obedience. But, the ſmall number of his troops left in the country, and the augmenting progreſs of the Flemings, rendered the conteſt very unequal. The only adequate remedy to ſuch accumulated evils, lay in the immediate nomination of a governor, whoſe talents and capacity might yet retrieve the royal affairs. Don John of Auſtria was ſelected by the king for the employ-

Affairs of the Netherlands.

Death of Requeſens.

Pacification of Ghent.

employment. The luſtre of his birth; the attachment, entertained for the memory of the emperor, Charles the Fifth, his father, who was himſelf a native of Flanders; and the high reputation which Don John had acquired by the victory of Lepanto: theſe circumſtances, it was hoped, might aid his efforts, and terminate the rebellion, which had ſo long rendered the Netherlands a theatre of war. The prince inſtantly obeyed the orders of his ſovereign: having received directions for his conduct, he paſſed through France in diſguiſe, and arrived ſafely at Luxembourg, the capital of the province of the ſame name, which had refuſed to enter into the general confederacy for the expulſion of the Spaniards [21]. CHAP. II. 1576. Arrival of Don John of Auſtria.

After the precipitate departure of Henry from Poland, that kingdom remained for a conſiderable time, in a ſtate of interregnum. The Senate and the other orders having met at Warſaw, drew up letters to him, which, though couched in terms of obedience and reſpect, evinced the reſentment of the nation, for his contempt of their crown. They demanded his immediate return, to reſume the functions of his dignity, as well as to protect them againſt external invaſion; and in caſe of his refuſal or delay, they ſignified to him their reſolution to declare the vacancy of the throne, and to proceed to a new election. Henry made only ſome faint and ineffectual exertions, to avert ſo deciſive a meaſure. Pibrac, who was diſpatched by him to Cracow, with inſtructions to propoſe to the diet, the union of the two kingdoms of France and Poland, found the ſentence of depoſition already iſſued, and the decree publiſhed in the capital. In ſo deſperate and hopeleſs a ſituation, he, nevertheleſs, exerted every effort to prevent its accompliſhment; addreſſed letters, in Henry's name, to the nobles; and urged all the motives which might be ſuppoſed to influence their deliberations. But, the Poles had irrevocably determined Affairs of Poland. Depoſition of Henry by the Poles.

[21] Strada, de Bello Bel. vol. ii. p. 285—320. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 364—394.

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to elect another ſovereign; and the two factions by which the kingdom was agitated, however adverſe to each other, agreed in their common averſion to the French prince and nation. The emperor Maximilian the Second was choſen in the enſuing diet, by a conſiderable party: but, his delays proved fatal to his cauſe, and gave advantages to his rival, which could never be retrieved. Stephen Battori, a Hungarian nobleman, who had already been elected prince of Tranſylvania, called in by his adherents, was raiſed to the throne. His vigor, capacity, and various endowments, rendered him worthy of ſo extraordinary an elevation; and Poland, under his reign, was equally tranquil at home, and reſpected by foreign powers [22].

Election of Stephen Battori. May.

It was, notwithſtanding, highly probable, that his election would be followed by a civil and a foreign war. The partizans of Maximilian were numerous and powerful: John Baſilowitz, Czar of Muſcovy, prepared to ſupport him, and to invade the eaſtern provinces of the kingdom: Dantzic, the moſt opulent and trading city of Poland, refuſed obedience to Stephen; and the emperor himſelf, though neither of a martial temper, nor diſpoſed to engage unneceſſarily in hoſtilities; yet, could not tamely ſubmit to renounce a ſceptre, which had been conferred on him by a conſiderable number of the ſuffrages of the nation. The Poles were exempted from this calamity, by the death of Maximilian, who expired at Ratiſbon, in the fiftieth year of his age, after having held the Imperial dignity only twelve years. His loſs was deeply and univerſally felt, by every denomination of his ſubjects. The benignity of his character; his enlarged principles of toleration; his love of peace; his application to buſineſs; and the deſire by which he was animated of diffuſing happineſs, rendered him inexpreſſibly dear to his people. The houſe of Auſtria, though not formidable to the repoſe of Europe, as it had been under Charles the

Death of Maximilian the Second. October.

His character.

[22] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 273—285, p. 353—356. Solignac, Hiſt. de Polo. vol. v. p. 477—493.

Fifth,

Fifth, his uncle, was ſtill reſpectable; and the Imperial office, which in Maximilian's hands, inſpired equal veneration and affection, fell into contempt, and almoſt into oblivion, under the adminiſtration of his ſucceſſor, Rodolph the Second. The laſt acts of Maximilian were exerted to maintain the civil and religious tranquillity of Germany; nor did the ſixteenth century produce any ſovereign, ſo juſtly entitled to the love of his contemporaries, and the eſteem of poſterity [23]. CHAP. II. 1576.

The other European ſtates, at this period of time, offered few events which materially affected the general repoſe. England, governed by Elizabeth, enjoyed a profound tranquillity; though that wiſe and vigilant princeſs, who never, during her long reign, intermitted her provident attention, kept a conſtant eye upon the concerns of the Netherlands, and already extended to them her indirect aſſiſtance. Philip the Second, not leſs attentive, and ſtill more deeply intereſted, in the fate of the Low Countries, exhauſted the immenſe treaſures and reſources of his vaſt dominions, in fruitleſs exertions to reduce the Flemings. Incapable of atchieving it by force, and apprehenſive of the interference of France; he began to move thoſe ſecret, but, powerful ſprings, in the interior ſyſtem of the French government, by which the throne of Henry the Third was ſhaken, and nearly ſubverted. Philip himſelf, occupied in viſiting the various provinces of Spain, in reforming abuſes, and in reſtoring juſtice, diſcharged with ability the functions annexed to his ſituation; and he preſerved an uninterrupted peace in the Spaniſh monarchy, while Flanders was deſolated by all the calamities of war [24]. Portugal, at the ſummit of proſperity, approached the term of its greatneſs, and even of its exiſtence, as an independant nation. Sebaſtian, in- State of Europe. England. Spain. Portugal.

[23] Schmidt, Hiſt. des Allemans, tranſlated by de la Veaux, vol. viii. p. 384—390. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 358.

[24] Abregé Chronique d'Eſpagne, et Portugal, vol. ii. p. 425.

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toxicated with views of conqueſt in Africa, was engroſſed by that ſingle object. In defiance of the remonſtrances of his miniſters, and even of Philip the Second, he was preparing to embark on the fatal expedition againſt Morocco, which terminated his life, and reduced his country to a ſtate of ſervitude and degradation [25].

[25] Abregé Chronique d'Eſpagne, et Portugal, p. 423 and 424.

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Origin, formation, and principles of "the League."—Aſſembly of the ſtates general, at Blois.—Henry declares himſelf the chief of "the League."—Renewal of the war with the Proteſtants.—Peace.—Edict of Poitiers.—Conduct of the king.—State of the court.—Expedition, and death of Sebaſtian, king of Portugal.—Affairs of the Netherlands.—Duke of Anjou is called to the aſſiſtance of the Flemings.—Death of Don John of Auſtria.—Internal concerns of France.—Recommencement of the civil war.—Cauſes, by which it was produced.—Ill ſucceſs of the Hugonots—Concluſion of peace.—Affairs of the Low Countries.—Exploits of the prince of Parma.—Treaty, made by the States of Flanders, with the duke of Anjou.—Death of Henry, king of Portugal.—Conqueſt of that kingdom, by Philip the Second.—Death, and character of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy.

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THE peace which Henry had recently concluded with the confederate princes, had diſarmed and diſunited that powerful combination; but, it had by no means ſecured either his own repoſe, or the tranquillity of his ſubjects. Conditions, ſuch as the Hugonots had extorted from him, placed them on an equality with the Catholics, in every eſſential point; and might rather be eſteemed the triumph, than the toleration of the Proteſtant religion. Nor could the people perſuade themſelves, that theſe conceſſions were the reſult of wiſdom, in a diſcerning and ſagacious monarch, attentive to the great intereſts of his dominions, and watchful over the general felicity. The whole tenor of Henry's conduct expoſed him to cenſure, and tended to render him odious and contemptible. Sunk in diſſipation, his prodigality had already exhauſted all the ordinary ſources

Condition of France.

of

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of revenue, and ſubjected him to the ſevere humiliation of a refuſal, when he attempted to extort ſupplies from the capital. His attachment to the Catholic faith was unqueſtionable; and his antipathy to all innovation in religious concerns, was equally aſcertained. But his devotion had nothing elevated, or even rational, in its nature; and it conſiſted rather in monaſtic obſervances, or eccleſiaſtical ceremonies, than in a ſincere obedience to the duties and precepts of piety and morality. The indignation excited among his Catholic ſubjects, at the terms of the late pacification, concurring with the diſadvantageous impreſſions, which the king's general character and adminiſtration produced, were artfully fomented by the partizans of the family of Guiſe. They repreſented, and exaggerated, the vices of Henry; the danger to which he expoſed the antient religion; and the urgent neceſſity of ſome ſpeedy interpoſition, to protect from ruin the church and ſtate. The diſſimulation of the queen-mother, and her indifference to every mode of faith: the recent junction of the duke of Anjou with the Proteſtants; and the pernicious conceſſions made by the king, in order to detach him from that party: all theſe obvious topics of declamation were inſiſted on with aſperity and malignity. The minds of men, irritated by ſo forcible an appeal to their paſſions, and exaſperated by the arts of faction, were prepared for a daring effort; and as the crown had either abandoned or betrayed their cauſe, they began to look elſewhere for ſupport and protection[1].

Diſſatisfaction of the Catholics.

Confederations, formed.

In ſuch a ſtate of fermentation and diſcontent, no remedy was regarded as too violent for the diſeaſe. Allegiance itſelf ſeemed to be withdrawn, where ſuperior conſiderations ſtimulated to reſiſtance; and it became requiſite to combine, for the purpoſe of mutual preſervation againſt a common enemy. During the turbulent and agitated periods of the reign of Charles the Ninth, indications of a diſpoſition in the people to form confederations or fraternities, had manifeſted themſelves, in various parts of France. The avowed, or oſtenſible

[1] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 422—429.

object

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object of them, was the maintenance of the purity of the Catholic faith; but, from many cauſes, they had hitherto been confined in their operations, and limited in their extent. The weakneſs of the throne under Henry, and the perſonal contempt into which he was fallen, encouraged the moſt timid, and impelled the moſt wavering. Picardy, a province, remarkable for the bigotry and fervour of its inhabitants, gave the firſt open example of an aſſociation for preſerving the antient religion. By the articles of the late peace, the government of Picardy had been confirmed to the prince of Condé; and the town of Peronne was aſſigned for his peculiar reſidence. He was ſpeedily expected to arrive there; and it was natural to ſuppoſe, that his preſence muſt be attended with injurious conſequences to the zealous Catholics. The apprehenſion of this impending danger, gave birth to the memorable confederation, known in hiſtory by the name of "the League;" which, ſpreading with rapidity, ſoon overſhadowed, and at length overturned the throne; occaſioned the aſſaſſination of Henry himſelf; and during near twenty years, involved the kingdom in all the miſfortunes of civil war, confuſion, and anarchy[a].

Origin of the League.

Humieres, governor of Peronne, was the firſt inſtrument and mover of ſo vaſt a machine, by encouraging the inhabitants of the place, and of the neighbouring country, to ſign the aſſociation. The nobility of Picardy, with ardor, followed the example, which ſpread through various provinces: Champagne, and Burgundy, from the hereditary influence of the dukes of Guiſe and Mayenne, received it univerſally. In Poitou, Louis de la Tremouille, duke of Thouars, from apprehenſion of the Hugonots, who were numerous and powerful in the vicinity of his eſtates, introduced it among his vaſſals, and gave it credit by his ſupport. Agents of an inferior deſcription, chiefly ſelected from the private walks of life, were its promoters in the metropolis. Paris, diſcontented, and eaſily inflamed by artful ſuggeſ-

Its favorable reception.

[a] Davila, p. 446 and 447. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 177—180.

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tions, embraced with enthuſiaſm, a propoſition, which appeared to have no object except the preſervation of civil and religious rights [3].

1576. Its nature and principles.

The form and language of the League itſelf, did not, on a ſuperficial view, ſeem to ſtrike at any of the prerogatives of the crown, or to endanger the public tranquillity. The preſervation of the monarchy, and even of the reigning ſovereign, formed a diſtinguiſhed article of the covenant. But, on a cloſer inſpection, it was evident, that under ſo fair an appearance, deſigns the moſt deſtructive to the kingdom, and to Henry, were concealed. The oath of unlimited obedience to the orders of the chief or head, was clear and ſpecific; and it extended to engage the contracting perſons to ſupport him againſt any and every power, which might oppoſe his commands. No exception, in favour of the crown, was inſerted, or admitted; and it was palpable that another perſon than the ſovereign might be named to that high and dangerous office. Thoſe who were initiated in the myſteries of the aſſociation, already underſtood, that the duke of Guiſe was deſigned for its leader; and that the king, far from receiving protection, might become the victim of the League [4].

Protection, extended to it by Philip the Second.

External aſſiſtance and ſupport were not wanting to aid the internal efforts, made to ſpread ſo alarming a conflagration. Application was made, at a very early period, to the Papal ſee, for ſpiritual aid and approbation; while ſimilar demands were conveyed to the court of Spain, for pecuniary ſupplies, and even, if neceſſary, for a military force. The anſwer to both theſe requeſts, was encouraging. Gregory the Thirteenth, who then filled the chair of St. Peter, a pontiff of zeal, but neither violent nor ſanguinary in his character; though he approved the oſtenſible motives, yet, apprehenſive of the conſequences concealed under them, lent only an ambiguous and mitigated degree of ſanction to the project. But, Philip, who dreaded the approach of the French arms towards the Netherlands, and already anticipated

[3] De Thou, ut ſupra. Mezerai, ibid.

[4] Davila, p. 448—452. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 223—230.

the

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the application of the Flemings to the duke of Anjou, or to Henry, for ſuccours; did not heſitate to promiſe the moſt unbounded aſſiſtance to the League, and even accepted the title of its protector [5].

Diſſimulation of the king.

Information of the commencement and progreſs of this alarming attempt to overturn the principles of civil order and obedience, was conveyed through various channels, to the government. An emiſſary, who had been diſpatched to the court of Rome, was ſeized on his return to France, by the Hugonots; and the plan of the League in its greateſt detail, being found upon him, they rendered it public. Corroborating proofs of the ſame nature were tranſmitted to the king, from his embaſſador at Madrid, in a manner to preclude any doubt upon the authenticity of the intelligence. But, numerous reaſons induced him to diſſemble, and to ſuſpend his reſentment. The Guiſes not only denied many of the charges made againſt themſelves perſonally, as entertaining ambitious views of elevation: thoſe princes were likewiſe popular, powerful, and dangerous to provoke. Henry was incapable of a ſteady, ſyſtematic exertion, and preferred temporizing, to violent meaſures, in every event or ſituation of his life. His policy, which always aimed at deſtroying one faction by another, dictated to him to encourage, rather than depreſs, the party of the Catholics; and as he never meant to accompliſh the conditions of the late peace, he was not ſorry that the general reſentment, manifeſted at the favorable terms granted to the Hugonots, afforded him ſo plauſible a pretence for not carrying it into execution [6].

He eludes the late treaty.

The intentions of the court were clearly manifeſted, by the infractions, openly authorized, or privately permitted, in defiance of all the complaints and remonſtrances of the Hugonots. Even the interpoſition of John Caſimir, who had not yet evacuated the kingdom, and whoſe forces lived at diſcretion in Burgundy, were ineffectual to obtain redreſs. The prince of Condé, far from being put in poſſeſſion

[5] Davila, p. 452 and 453. Mezerai, vol. ii. p. 179 and 180.
[6] Davila, p. 453 and 454.

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of the government of Picardy, was refuſed entrance into Peronne. The admiſſion of Proteſtants into the parliaments and courts of juſtice, was delayed, or eluded: their aſſemblies for purpoſes of devotion, were inſulted; and every unqualified violation of the peace ſo recently concluded, was committed with impunity. Irritated at ſuch a breach of faith, and deſtitute of any retreat, in caſe of a recommencement of hoſtilities; the prince of Condé, without waiting for the iſſue of a negociation, which Henry had begun with him for the exchange of St. John d'Angely in the place of Peronne, rendered himſelf maſter of the former city. It was ſituated in the province of Saintonge; and he ſhortly afterwards acquired a more important poſſeſſion in its vicinity. Brouage, a town, not diſtant from Rochelle, and open to the Atlantic, fell into his hands; and theſe valuable captures formed no inconſiderable equivalent for the loſs of Picardy [7].

Reſentment of the prince of Condé.

Under theſe circumſtances of public fermentation and animoſity, the aſſembly of the ſtates general met at Blois. They were opened by the king in perſon, who, accompanied by his brother, by the queen-mother, and the Catholic princes of the blood, in a long and eloquent harangue, depictured and deplored the condition of the kingdom. He repreſented the decay of loyalty, the diminution of commerce, the triumph of immorality, and the univerſal depravity which pervaded all orders of the people. He profeſſed his readineſs to liſten to their advice, and beſought their co-operation towards reſtoring the proſperity of France. Theſe gracious and conciliating aſſurances were anſwered by ſimilar demonſtrations of affection. But, the king, who had flattered himſelf that he ſhould be able to guide and controul the deliberations of the ſtates, was not long in diſcovering, that a more powerful, though a concealed cauſe, influenced all their deliberations. The boldeſt invaſions of his prerogative were attempted: a renewal of the war was loudly demanded; and the ma-

Convocation of the ſtates general. December.

[7] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 432—436. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 176.

jority

jority proteſted againſt the toleration or exiſtence of any religion, except the Catholic, throughout the kingdom [8]. In ſo embarraſſing a ſituation, beſet with difficulties, and conſcious that the emiſſaries of the Guiſes were maſters of the aſſembly; Henry embraced an expedient, which, however the reſult of neceſſity, fully evinced his own weakneſs. Apprehenſive that the League might dictate to him in the moſt peremptory terms, and even turn their forces againſt him: ſtill more alarmed, that the duke of Guiſe might be named to the vacant place of chief; he reſolved to aſſume that poſt himſelf. Having taken the reſolution, he executed it immediately; ſigned the League in the moſt public manner, aſſumed the title of its head, and tranſmitted the confederation itſelf to Paris, with orders to receive it throughout the kingdom [9].

1576. Henry ſigns the confederation of the League.

So inconteſtable a proof of his adherence to the Catholic faith, and the proſpect of thoſe calamities which were inſeparable from a renewal of war, began to produce a deep impreſſion on the aſſembly. The members of the third eſtate, aware that on the body of the people, whom they ſpecially repreſented, the pecuniary burdens muſt principally fall, betrayed ſymptoms of averſion to the aſſumption of arms. Henry augmented theſe proofs of repugnance, by a requiſition of two millions of ducats, a ſum not very far ſhort of a million ſterling, as indiſpenſable for maintaining the armies to be employed; and he ventured to propoſe an alienation of the domain of the crown to a conſiderable annual amount, as the moſt eligible mode for raiſing the money, in the preſent exigency. The propoſition was ſolemnly argued in the aſſembly; and after a long diſcuſſion, the virtue of the repreſentatives of the commons, rejected it in a manner the moſt deciſive. The king, anxious to reduce the Hugonots to a ſtate of civil and religious dependance; but, more deſirous to avoid engaging in a war for their extermination, ſtill delayed, and avoided extremities. He even ſent, with a view of depre-

Meaſures adopted by the king.

1577. Deputation ſent to the Hugonots.

[8] Davila, p. 458—463.

[9] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 458 and 459. Davila, p. 466.

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cating hoſtilities, a deputation to the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé, as well as to marſhal Damville. Its reception was different, according to the character and diſpoſition of the three perſons. From the firſt, an anſwer was received, which, though equivocal and ambiguous, breathed the ſpirit of obedience to the crown, and of moderation on religious concerns: but, the prince of Condé, more zealous, inflexible, and ſevere, refuſed either to acknowledge the validity of the ſtates, or to receive their delegates. Damville, while on one hand, he profeſſed the ſtrongeſt adherence to the Catholic faith, reprobated the violation of the late edict, and declined entering into any negociation, excluſive of the other confederates [10].

Renewal of the civil war.

The irreſolution of Henry was overborne by the imprudence of the Proteſtants themſelves, who, incenſed at the revocation of a treaty, which had ſecured to them ſo many and important immunities, refuſed to admit of any innovation, or modulation of the articles. But, the event ſufficiently demonſtrated, how erroneous an eſtimate they had formed of their own ſtrength and reſources. Diſunited among themſelves; no longer conducted by the genius of Coligni, who had ſurmounted ſo many defeats; unſupported by a foreign force; and preſſed by the ſuperior weight of the crown, united to the Catholics; the conteſt was too unequal to be long maintained.

March.

Two armies, levied by the king, marched againſt them, and met with a feeble reſiſtance. The firſt was commanded by the duke of Anjou in perſon, who, from their ally, had become their moſt implacable opponent. Henry's jealouſy of the duke of Guiſe, excluded him from conducting the ſecond, which was committed to his brother,

Succeſs of the royal arms.

the duke of Mayenne. An uninterrupted ſeries of ſucceſs attended both armies. La Charité, one of the moſt important military poſts in the kingdom, as it formed a paſſage acroſs the Loire, and might

May.

have facilitated the entry of a German army; ſurrendered, after a

[10] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 471—474, and 478. Davila, p. 469 and 470.

ſhort

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ſhort ſiege, to the duke of Anjou. His victorious troops, unoppoſed, penetrated into Auvergne, inveſted Iſſoire in that province; and having entered it at the breach, reduced it to aſhes. The garriſon was ſacrificed to the ferocity of the ſoldiers. Nor was the duke of Mayenne's progreſs in Poitou, leſs rapid. Brouage, which had been recently ſeized by the prince of Condé, capitulated after a long blockade: the Hugonot fleet, which attempted to throw ſupplies of proviſions into the place, was compelled to retire, after ſuſtaining a conſiderable loſs; and even Rochelle itſelf, regarded as the aſylum of the Proteſtant faith and party, appeared to be in a ſituation the moſt perilous. Damville, who had long fluctuated in his political connexions, alienated by ſome cauſes of miſunderſtanding, quitted the confederacy; and turned his arms againſt his late allies, in Languedoc. No effort, worthy their former reputation, was made by any of the Hugonot chiefs. The nobility, weary of the war, retired to their caſtles: the troops diſbanded; and the people, reduced to poverty by the rapacity of a fierce and licentious ſoldiery, loudly demanded a termination of their accumulated misfortunes[11].

1577. June. Auguſt. Feeble exertions of the Hugonots.

If Henry's policy, or inclinations, had permitted him to puſh his advantages over a party, broken, and already vanquiſhed; the Hugonots might have been reduced to accept any conditions, however ſevere, which he had thought proper to impoſe. But, ſuch a triumph would have been more apparent, than real; and would have conduced more to the advantage of the houſe of Guiſe, as the concealed chiefs of the League, than either to the grandeur or ſtability of the throne. The Catholics themſelves, who preſerved their allegiance, and who were not diſpoſed to ſacrifice the public ſafety to the ambitious projects of the duke of Guiſe, betrayed the moſt anxious deſire for peace. Encouraged by theſe ſymptoms of the national approbation, Henry, after a ſhort negociation with the king of Navarre, concluded

Policy of Henry.

Concluſion of peace. September.

[11] *Mezerai*, vol. ix. p. 191—196. Davila, p. 471 and 472.

a treaty,

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a treaty, which was afterwards ratified and publiſhed at Poitiers. It was the fifth, which had been made between the two parties, ſince the commencement of the civil wars, under Charles the Ninth. The articles, though far leſs favorable to the Proteſtants, than thoſe of the preceding one, eſtabliſhed and admitted, under certain reſtrictions, a toleration of religion. Its exerciſe was, however, interdicted within ten leagues of the metropolis, or, in the immediate vicinity of the court. Eight cities were ceded to the Hugonots, as a guarantee for the execution of the conditions: but, their reſtitution was ſtipulated, at the end of four years. Various regulations, calculated to introduce a degree of police, and to maintain order, were inſerted into the treaty [12].

Reflexions on that event.

The general ſatisfaction with which it was received by the majority of the nation, formed its beſt eulogium. The king, who regarded it as peculiarly his own work, denominated it, with complacency, *his* peace; and the prince of Condé did not manifeſt leſs impatience to publiſh it in the city of Rochelle. It may be eſteemed the wiſeſt and moſt judicious meaſure of the reign of Henry the Third; and if that prince had improved the occaſion which it preſented him, of eſtabliſhing a vigorous adminiſtration; the League, notwithſtanding its prodigious reſources, might have been cruſhed before it attained to maturity [13]. But, the character of the king, as it became more fully unveiled, far from inſpiring reſpect, excited contempt, and even averſion. His profuſion anticipated and exhauſted the revenues. A ſucceſſion of favorites, characterized by the ſame rapacity, profligacy, and contempt of decorum, rendered the court a ſcene of indecent riot, or of ſcandalous diſſipation. Catherine of Medecis, ſubſervient to all the vices and weakneſſes of her ſon, did not ſcruple to be preſent at theſe feſtivities; and Margaret, queen of Navarre, her daughter,

Mal-adminiſtration, and vices of the king.

[12] Davila, p. 473 and 474. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 529—531. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 197 and 198. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 327 and 328.

[13] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 289—307.

loſt to every ſenſe of female honor, or chaſtity, conſtituted the principal ornament of her brother's palace and amuſements. The prerogative of the crown became odious, from the abuſe of its powers. Taxes, varied by the ingenuity of pernicious miniſters, and multiplied in a thouſand ſhapes; while they exhauſted the patience of the people, were inſufficient to ſuffice for the prodigality of the ſovereign. The mixture of devotion, which Henry affected, and the pilgrimages or proceſſions, in which he continually engaged, only ſerved to render his enormities more conſpicuous, and to call in queſtion the ſincerity of his attachment to religion itſelf. His brother, the duke of Anjou, however exempt from ſome of the imputations thrown on the king, was ſcarcely more an object of eſteem. Like Henry, he was inconſtant, capricious, and deſtitute of principles of virtue; plunged in exceſſes of libertiniſm; equally enſlaved by favorites; and incapable of ſuſtaining the majeſty of the throne, to which his birth, and the king's want of iſſue, rendered it probable that he might eventually be called. Theſe defects and vices, ſtill more than the great qualities by which the duke of Guiſe was diſtinguiſhed, gradually prepared the minds of the people for the convulſions that followed; and when matured by time, left the crown expoſed to all the enterprizes of ambition, and the violence of rebellion [14].

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Conduct of the duke of Anjou.

France, meanwhile, was far from enjoying the internal repoſe, which the peace concluded at Poitiers, ought to have naturally produced. Religious antipathy, ſuperior to the force of edicts, or the reſtraints of law, continued to arm the inhabitants againſt each other. The intolerance of the age could not allow liberty of opinion, or of practice, in matters of conſcience; and the long habits of civil war, had rendered the people ſanguinary, ſuſpicious, and cruel. Damville, who exerciſed a ſpecies of independant juriſdiction in his government of Languedoc; on various pretences refuſed to diſarm, and even maintained hoſtilities againſt the Proteſtants. Leſdiguieres, who

1578. Internal commotions of France.

[14] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 199.

commanded

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commanded the Hugonot forces in Dauphiné, had not forgotten the recent execution of Montbrun, under whom he had carried arms; and he did not truſt ſufficiently either the faith of the king, or the ſanction of edicts, to diveſt himſelf of his military protection [15]. Many acts of outrage and violence were committed with impunity in the provinces. The court itſelf, after exhibiting every ſpecies of luxurious and diſſolute entertainment, became a theatre of diſcord and of blood. Theſe tranſitions originated in the king's miſconduct, and excited little ſurprize. His brother, the duke of Anjou, diſſatisfied with the treatment which he received, and apprehenſive of being again arreſted, withdrew a ſecond time, quitted Paris, and retired into Normandy; from whence he ſent aſſurances of his loyalty and obedience to the crown. But, a more ſerious and tragical event, made a deep, though only a temporary, impreſſion on Henry's mind.

February. Retreat of the duke of Anjou from court.

Royal favorites.

From the period of his acceſſion, he had been governed by favorites, who ſucceeded each other with amazing rapidity. Bellegarde had been ſupplanted before his maſter's arrival at Lyons; and du Gua was aſſaſſinated within a year, during the plenitude of his power. The vacant places were quickly occupied by new candidates. Villequier, one of the moſt corrupt and profligate companions of the king's pleaſures, preſided over the department; and the royal favor was divided between thoſe whom he preſented, or recommended. As they were all in the bloom of youth, diſtinguiſhed by the graces of perſon, and naturally elated with their good fortune; perpetual quarrels took place between them, and the adherents, or retainers of the nobility, who filled the court.

Duel of Quelus and Entragues.

Quelus, one of Henry's minions, having challenged Francis d'Entragues, a young man of quality, attached to the duke of Guiſe; the combatants, each accompanied by two of his friends, met in one of the moſt public places of the capital, to terminate the diſpute. The ſeconds engaged with the ſame ardor and animoſity, as the principals. Of the ſix, two were

April.

[15] Davila, P. 474.

left

left dead upon the place: one expired on the following day; and Quelus himſelf, pierced with nineteen wounds, languiſhed near a month, before he breathed his laſt. The indications of affection, exhibited by the king towards him, during the courſe of his malady; and the demonſtrations of his ſorrow for the death of Quelus, and of Maugiron, another of his favorites who had fallen in the duel, were equally indecent and unmanly. He embraced their dead bodies; ordered them a public funeral, at which all the courtiers aſſiſted; received compliments of condolance, as for the loſs of princes of the blood; and appeared to be, for ſome time, inconſolable [16]. Incapable of any permanent emotion, he ſoon recovered his gaiety, and obliterated the recollection of the deceaſed, in the ſociety of new favorites. But, the injurious impreſſions, made by his conduct, on the minds of the people, were not effaced with the ſame facility. Proofs of contempt, and of indignation, appeared in many parts of the kingdom; and the profuſion with which offices, dignities, and emoluments were conferred on the unworthy aſſociates of his looſer hours, while it exhauſted the public treaſure, encreaſed the general diſſatisfaction. The ſtates of Burgundy, in a high-ſpirited remonſtrance, ventured, without diſguiſe, to arraign in ſevere terms, the king's profuſion; enumerated their grievances, and ſpecified the adequate remedies. Henry diſſembled his reſentment at ſo bold an attack, which he attributed to the princes of the houſe of Guiſe; and he was even reduced to the neceſſity of employing the intervention of the duke of Mayenne, governor of the province, to allay the diſcontent of the nobility and of the ſtates. Theſe ſeeds of diſcontent were not however eradicated; and time gradually matured them to the moſt alarming degree [17].

CHAP. III. 1578.

General diſcontent of the kingdom.

November.

[16] Etoile. Journ. d'Henry III. p. 92. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 725—728. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 201 and 202.

[17] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729—731.

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1578. Affairs of Portugal. Enterprize of Sebaſtian.

While the vices of Henry, which a powerful faction placed in the moſt conſpicuous and odious point of view, ſilently prepared a great convulſion in France; an ardent, and ill-regulated thirſt of glory in Sebaſtian, king of Portugal, produced the deſtruction of that monarchy. Having determined on an expedition to the coaſt of Barbary, for the purpoſe of reſtoring Mahomet, who pretended to the ſovereignty of Fez, no obſtacles could prevent, nor remonſtrances diſſuade him from his reſolution. After ſurmounting, not without difficulty, numerous impediments, he, at length, embarked from the Tagus, at the head of a numerous ſquadron, and a conſiderable army. Muley Moluc, the reigning prince, againſt whom his efforts were directed, endeavoured to avoid the conteſt, and made offers for an accommodation. But, the temerity and imprudence of Sebaſtian rendered him incapable of diſcerning his own intereſt, or of liſtening to any conſiderations, except thoſe of conqueſt. Landing in Africa, he engaged in a general action near Arzila, where his troops, ill diſciplined, outnumbered by the enemy, and ſurrounded on all ſides, were either cut to pieces, or captured by the Moors. He himſelf, after having given proofs of the moſt deſperate valor, periſhed in the engagement. Mahomet, whom he had vainly attempted to place on the throne of Fez and Morocco, was drowned in his flight from the field of battle; and Muley Moluc, attacked by a mortal diſeaſe, expired in his litter, in the moment of victory, before the event of the day was fully decided. Hamet, his brother, ſucceeded to the ſupreme authority [18].

Auguſt. His death.

Reign of the cardinal Henry.

The conſternation, occaſioned in Portugal by ſo lamentable a cataſtrophé, exceeded deſcription; and the preſent calamity, however great, was ſwallowed up in the view and contemplation of the more alarming conſequences of Sebaſtian's defeat and death. That young and unfortunate prince had left no iſſue; and the crown devolved to

[18] La Clede, Hiſt. de Portugal, vol. ii. p. 58—72. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 599—634.

the

the only ſurviving male deſcendant of their antient kings. Henry, cardinal of the Romiſh church, and archbiſhop of Evora, ſon to the celebrated Emanuel, had attained to his ſixty-ſeventh year, when called to the throne. Adorned with many of the virtues which render a private ſtation amiable, he poſſeſſed few of the qualities requiſite in a monarch; and his advanced period of life, together with his declining health, promiſed only a ſhort and precarious reign. The ſucceſſion, uncertain, and claimed by many candidates, held up to the nation the proſpect of a civil and foreign war; while the late diſaſter deprived them of the means of defence againſt an enemy. Philip the Second, king of Spain, who ſtood in the relation of uncle to Sebaſtian, by the marriage of Iſabella of Portugal with Charles the Fifth, already diſplayed his pretenſions; and the vaſt diſparity between his force, and that of any other claimant, muſt neceſſarily decide the conteſt in his favor [19]. CHAP. III. 1578.

But, neither the terrors of the Spaniſh power, which ſeemed to be on the point of receiving ſo vaſt an acceſſion, by the probable conqueſt of Portugal; nor the preſence and talents of Don John of Auſtria, could reſtore any degree of tranquillity in the Netherlands. The affairs of that country, and its final deſtiny, appeared to become annually more complicated, perplexed, and doubtful. Don John, far from adducing any remedy to the diſcontents of the Flemings, had, by his conduct, alienated and incenſed them againſt the court of Spain. His firſt proceedings were, notwithſtanding, calculated to conciliate univerſal affection. By the advice of Eſcovedo, his ſecretary and miniſter, he confirmed the pacification of Ghent, cauſed the Spaniſh troops inſtantly to evacuate Flanders, and received anew the oath of fealty and obedience from the States, to Philip the Second. His entry into Bruſſels, as governor general, was marked with demonſtrations of public joy; and for a ſhort time, his adminiſtration ſeemed to Tranſactions in the Netherlands. Meaſures of Don John of Auſtria.

[19] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 72 and 73.

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1578.

rival in popularity that of his ſiſter, Margaret of Parma. But, the ambition of Don John could not be gratified by ſo limited an authority; and he ſpeedily repented of his facility, in having diſmiſſed the veteran troops, which had fought under the duke of Alva, and Requeſens. Having ſeized on the citadel of Namur, he prepared to regain the power which he had unwillingly ceded, and to reduce the Flemings, by force of arms. Irritated at ſuch treatment, the States called to their aid the archduke Mathias, ſon to Maximilian the Second, and brother to the emperor Rodolph; while Don John, reinforced by the Spaniards, whom Alexander Farneſe, prince of

January. Parma, conducted from Italy, attacked, and defeated the Flemings at Gemblours [20].

The duke of Anjou embraces the protection of the Flemings.

An event, which ſeemed to threaten the entire reduction of the Netherlands to the obedience of Philip, and the extinction of all their privileges, afforded a favorable occaſion for the duke of Anjou to offer his aſſiſtance to the States. That prince, reſtleſs and ambitious; ill received at the court of Henry, who feared and ſuſpected him; odious to the Hugonots, whom he had abandoned; and anxious to obtain an eſtabliſhment beyond the limits of his brother's power; immediately ſent a deputation, to make propoſals for undertaking their defence and protection. His agents were received with gratitude, and treated with diſtinction. He himſelf, in order to accelerate the concluſion of a treaty, which promiſed him an entrance

Auguſt. into the Low Countries, advanced to the city of Mons in Haynault, where all the conditions were finally ſettled. He engaged to conduct to their aſſiſtance an army of ten thouſand infantry, and three thouſand cavalry; in return for which, the States conferred on him the title of Protector of the Belgic Liberties; guaranteed to him certain places, as ſecurity for the execution of the articles; and promiſed to elect

[20] Strada, de Bel. Belg. vol. ii. p. 321—404. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 545—573, and 649—661.

him for their ſovereign, if they ſhould eventually withdraw their allegiance from the king of Spain [21].

1578.

In conſequence of this treaty, the duke of Anjou entered Haynault, at the head of a conſiderable military force; made himſelf maſter of ſeveral frontier towns; and excited the higheſt expectations of his future progreſs. But, he ſoon perceived the difficulties attending an enterprize, which demanded talents equally various and ſuperior. His troops, compoſed of Catholics and Proteſtants, long accuſtomed to the licentiouſneſs of civil war, refuſed to ſubmit to the ſeverity of diſcipline. The Flemings, diſguſted and alienated by the exceſſes which the French ſoldiery committed, conſidered them as enemies, rather than as allies; and the places, ſtipulated to be delivered to him, ſhut their gates to oppoſe his entry. Incenſed at the failure of the engagements contracted by the States, the duke of Anjou withdrew again into France; after remonſtrating with them on their treatment of him, and aſſuring them of his return. He even ſent a detachment of three thouſand men to join the army of the Flemings. The remainder of his forces, no longer paid, immediately diſbanded [22].

He enters Haynault.

October.

Retreats.

The ill ſucceſs attending the enterprize of the duke of Anjou, together with the victory lately obtained by Don John of Auſtria at Gemblours, might have reſtored the Spaniſh affairs in the Netherlands, if Philip the Second had extended ſupport to his brother. But, that jealous and ſuſpicious monarch, alarmed at the ambitious and extenſive projects of Don John; far from ſupplying him with the requiſite force to reduce the Flemings, left him in a ſtate of total inability to maintain the war. The Spaniards were defeated in their turn, and compelled to retreat before the army of the States. Eſcovedo, who had been ſent by his maſter, to Madrid, to urge the diſpatch of troops and money, was aſſaſſinated in that

[21] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 670 and 671.

[22] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 207—209. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 688—690.

capital,

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capital, by the order, or consent of the king of Spain. Don John himself, exhausted by fatigue, and depressed by anxiety, did not long survive. Having resigned the command of the forces to Alexander, prince of Parma, he retired to Namur; where the struggles of a high-spirited and indignant mind, aiding the advances of disease, he expired in the vigor of his age, having scarcely accomplished his thirty-third year. The affliction of his troops at the intelligence, was extreme; and his contemporaries compared him to Germanicus, as they did Philip to Tiberius. The circumstances of his distemper and death, which were, though unjustly, attributed to poison; and the period of life at which he died, rendered the resemblance with the Roman general more striking, and the similarity more complete. Philip confirmed the government of the Low Countries, to the prince of Parma; and his great endowments, military as well as civil, rendered him worthy of so arduous a situation [23].

1578. Death of Don John.

1st October.

Prince of Parma, made governor of Netherlands.

1579. Indolence of Henry.

During this period of time, when the attention of all Europe was attracted towards the fate of Portugal, and of Flanders; France offered few events, which deserve to be commemorated. Henry, who might have improved the interval of repose, afforded by the peace with the Hugonots, to regain the esteem of his subjects, and to attack, while yet in their infancy, the dangerous designs of the League; made no exertions for his own preservation. Resigned to a life of indolence and pleasure, he abandoned the care of the state to his mother, and seemed to regard the royal dignity as only intended for the oppression of his people. Catherine of Medecis, whose virtues and whose vices were more active, visited, in the name, and by the authority of her son, the different parts of his dominions. She negotiated with the king of Navarre, in Gascony, for the maintenance of the treaty of Poitiers; which, after a long discussion, was explained by a number of secret articles, calculated to prolong the

Activity of the queen.

March.

[23] Strada, vol. ii. p. 466—471. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 696—698.

public

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public tranquillity. Having traverſed all Languedoc, and endeavoured to appeaſe, or to extinguiſh the ſeeds of commotion in the province, ſhe arrived at Grenoble, accompanied by Damville; in which place ſhe held a conference with Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. That able and enterprizing prince had engaged deeply in projects, injurious to Henry. Not content with having already obtained from him, the reſtitution of Pignerol and Savillan, the duke meditated the ſeizure of the marquiſate of Saluzzo. Catherine, anxious to preſerve ſo valuable a poſſeſſion, did not heſitate to paſs the borders of France, in order to have an interview with Bellegarde, the governor, at Montluel, in the territories of Savoy. It was ineffectual; but, his death ſoon afterwards, ſuſpended the execution of Emanuel Philibert's deſigns [24].

Creation of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

While the queen-mother thus exerciſed the real functions of a ſovereign, Henry performed the pageantries of royalty. The inſtitution of the order of the "Holy Ghoſt," which took place at this period, was deſigned to replace that of "St. Michael," become venal and contemptible, under the late reigns. The celebration of ſo public and ſplendid a ceremony, gratified the king's paſſion for expenſive exhibitions; and he flattered himſelf, that by aſſociating to his new order, many of the higheſt nobility, he might attach to his perſon a number of adherents [25]. Inſenſible as Henry appeared to every event of a public or national kind, he, nevertheleſs, betrayed, on various occaſions, a degree of attention, or concern, which proved, that however indolence and flattery had corrupted him, his mind was not totally deſtitute of elevation. He manifeſted the deepeſt regret, at the death of marſhal Montmorenci, on whom, from the purity of his virtue, his rectitude, and patriotiſm, the glorious title of "the laſt of the French," was conferred by his countrymen.

May. Death of marſhal Montmorenci.

[24] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 217—220. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 75—84. Davila, p. 481—483.
[25] Davila, p. 481. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 215—217.

During

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During the rage of civil war, and the ſhock of oppoſite factions, he preſerved his moderation, and exerted all his efforts to extinguiſh the flames of diſcord, by which France was deſolated. Become ſuſpected to Catherine of Medecis, in the laſt months of the reign of Charles the Ninth, on account of his ſuppoſed adherence to the duke of Alenſon and the Hugonots; he had been committed to the Baſtile: during his detention in that fortreſs, Henry, at the inſtigation of his mother, had iſſued orders to Souvré, the governor, to ſtrangle him; and he only owed the preſervation of his life to the delays, interpoſed by Souvré. His impriſonment, and the hardſhips annexed to it, advanced his end; and he expired of an apoplectic ſeizure, at fifty years of age. His death, peculiarly in the circumſtances of the kingdom, was a national misfortune. Damville, his brother, ſucceeded to the title of Montmorenci [26].

Henry takes under his protection, the city of Geneva.

Nor did the king evince leſs regard to the intereſts of the monarchy, on an occaſion, which called for his interference, nearly at the ſame time. The little republic of Geneva, almoſt ſurrounded by the dominions of the dukes of Savoy, derived its beſt ſecurity, from the alliance of the Swiſs cantons. It was believed, that Philip the Second and Emanuel Philibert had entered into a treaty, the object of which was the conqueſt and partition of Switzerland. To effect ſuch an enterprize, it was indiſpenſable to commence by the reduction of Geneva; and the ruinous conſequences of the plan to France, if carried into execution, were too obvious, to need elucidation. Urged by the cantons of Berne and Soleure, in the name of the Helvetic confederacy, to take the city of Geneva under his protection, as an ally of the Swiſs nation; Henry, after a conſiderable reluctance, complied. Articles, calculated for the defence of Geneva, againſt all external attack, were agreed on, and ratified by the king; who, in the trou-

May.

[26] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 162 and 163. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 84 and 85.

bles

bles which he already anticipated from the adherents of the League, knew that he ſhould derive his ſureſt military ſupport from the affection of the Switzers [27]. 1579.

Diſſolute conduct of the king.

Theſe tranſitory or capricious exertions were, unfortunately for himſelf and his people, preceded and followed by a complete dereliction of every public duty. The finances, committed to the moſt corrupt and profligate miniſters, became annually more inadequate to the neceſſities of the crown; while the king expended in diverſions, or feſtivities, the produce of accumulated taxes, under which his ſubjects groaned. The duke of Anjou, after again effecting his reconciliation with Henry, had, in ſome meaſure, poſtponed, though he had not abandoned, his projects on the Netherlands. The brave and celebrated La Noue, a Proteſtant, conducted a body of about three thouſand French, who were to act in conjunction with the ſtates of Flanders; while the duke himſelf, excited by the hopes of marrying Elizabeth, queen of England, had paſſed over, with a very ſlender train, into that kingdom. His reception was ſo flattering, as to maintain him for a long time, in illuſive expectation [28].

Auguſt.

Internal commotions.

Towards the cloſe of the year, alarming ſymptoms of the intention of the Hugonots to renew the civil war, began to manifeſt themſelves. At an aſſembly of the Proteſtant churches, held by the king of Navarre in perſon, at Maziere in Gaſcony, it was publickly agitated to take up arms. Various infractions of the laſt treaty, were aſſigned, as the cauſe and juſtification for their conduct; and after conſiderable difference of opinion, it was finally determined, that if immediate redreſs was not obtained from the crown, they would endeavour to extort it by violent means. No reſolution could have been more imprudent, if not unjuſt. Henry had not evinced any hoſtile diſpoſition towards the Hugonots; and the edict of Poitiers had been executed, if not with ſtrictneſs, yet in as literal and rigorous

November.

Hugonots project to renew the war.

[27] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 97—99. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 221 and 222.

[28] Davila, p. 483 and 484. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 89. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 221.

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a degree, as the tumultuous ſtate of the kingdom, and the diſordered nature of affairs, could permit. The Proteſtants themſelves were divided, and almoſt defenceleſs. Neither the zeal, nor the union, religious and civil, which had rendered them ſo formidable under Charles the Ninth, continued to exiſt. Since the temporary combination into which they had entered with the duke of Anjou and Damville, numbers of Catholics, and ſtill greater numbers of men, deſtitute of any principles of morals or religion, had united themſelves to the party. The king of Navarre himſelf, though attached to his own faith by honor, and by conviction, yet did not, in his conduct, obſerve even the appearances of decorum and morality. The little court of Nerac, in Gaſcony, where he held his principal reſidence, was the center of pleaſure, libertiniſm, and every ſpecies of gallantry. Margaret, queen of Navarre, his wife, who had been conducted thither by her mother, Catherine of Medecis, gave the example of theſe exceſſes, which were imitated by the courtiers; and ſhe even condeſcended, on many occaſions, to become ſubſervient to her huſband's amours, which ſhe facilitated and conducted [29]. The prince of Condé was almoſt the only perſon of diſtinguiſhed rank among the Hugonots, who maintained the purity and fervor of the primitive reformers: but, his power, revenues, and influence, were too limited, to produce any conſiderable effect. He derived, notwithſtanding, a perſonal conſideration from his intrepidity, activity, and indefatigable exertions. Impatient at the delays practiſed by the court of France, to prevent his entrance into Picardy, of which he was only the nominal governor; the prince anticipated the general reſolution of his party, to take up arms. Having quitted the city of St. John d'Angely, in Saintonge, where he uſually reſided, he repaired in diſguiſe to La Fere, in Picardy, which place he ſurprized, and immediately garriſoned [30].

State of the court of Navarre.

Prince of Condé.

November.

[29] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 222 and 223. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 344—346. Hiſt. de Margarite de Valois, p. 322 and 323.

[30] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 92.

Notwith-

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Notwithſtanding this demonſtration of the diſcontent of the Proteſtants, Henry, relying on the promiſes and aſſurances of his ſiſter, the queen of Navarre, took no meaſures againſt the projects of his Hugonot ſubjects. But, Margaret, who had received the moſt contumelious and humiliating marks of her brother's averſion, on various occaſions; and whoſe vindictive diſpoſition ſtimulated her to revenge; far from allaying, or ſoothing the paſſions of her huſband, endeavoured to point them againſt the perſon by whom ſhe had been offended. Her exhortations were ſufficiently powerful, not only to prevail on the king of Navarre, but, to induce the principal perſons in his confidence, to embrace the hazardous expedient of renewing the civil war. Regardleſs of their own inability to ſupport ſo arduous an enterprize; and impelled only by pretences of the weakeſt nature, they began their operations. The king of Navarre, after diſpatching meſſengers to his adherents in Languedoc and Dauphiné, to acquaint them of his ultimate reſolution, inſtantly attempted to make himſelf maſter of Cahors, by ſurprize. That city, capital of the province of Quercy, conſtituted a part of the dowry of Margaret, his wife; but, the animoſity of the inhabitants, zealouſly devoted to the Catholic faith, had prevented his reception into the place. The garriſon, notwithſtanding the loſs of their governor, who was killed at the beginning of the conflict, maintained a deſperate reſiſtance for ſeveral days; but, the aſſailants, ſupported by the preſence of their prince, who expoſed himſelf to every danger, were at length victorious. Cahors was reduced to aſhes; and every act of unreſtrained barbarity was exerciſed by the Proteſtants, in retaliation for the maſſacre committed there under Charles the Ninth, eight years preceding, of which the Hugonots had been the victims [31].

1580. Inactivity of the king.

April.

King of Navarre takes up arms.

May. Capture of Cahors.

The aſtoniſhment of Henry, at receiving intelligence of the attack and capture of Cahors, was exceeded and loſt in his indignation.

Meaſures of the king.

[31] D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 350—353. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 374—379. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 223—225. Davila, p. 487—489.

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1580.

Surmounting his habitual indolence, he made immediate and vigorous preparations for puniſhing the audacity of his rebellious ſubjects. At the ſame time, that he fitted out three conſiderable armies, deſtined to act againſt them in Dauphiné, Guienne, and Picardy; he embraced a meaſure, not leſs calculated to weaken and diſarm their adherents. A declaration was publiſhed by the royal authority, confirming all the preceding edicts favorable to the Proteſtants, on condition of their remaining peaceable; and enjoining the civil magiſtrates to puniſh as traitors to their country, ſuch as ſhould moleſt them in any manner [32]. The effect of ſo wiſe and timely an act, was ſenſibly felt throughout the kingdom. Many perſons, ſincerely attached to the reformed doctrines, had, nevertheleſs, diſapproved the reſumption of arms; and their diſinclination was augmented, as well as juſtified, by the declaration iſſued on the part of the crown. La Noue, one of the moſt virtuous and reſpected of their leaders, who was occupied at that time in hoſtilities againſt the Spaniards in the Netherlands, condemned the war, as manifeſtly unprovoked and unjuſtifiable. Rochelle refuſed to engage in it, and maintained a perfect neutrality. Other provinces declined to contribute towards, or to mingle in the controverſy. Even, in thoſe, where the Hugonots were the moſt numerous or powerful, feeble exertions were made, and few ſucceſsful enterprizes effected. It muſt be avowed, that of all the civil wars, occaſioned by religious animoſity, ſince the conſpiracy of Amboiſe under the reign of Francis the Second, this was begun on the moſt inſufficient pretexts, and is the leaſt to be vindicated [33].

June.

Their effect on the Hugonots.

Its ſucceſs was perfectly correſpondent to the principles, on which it had been commenced, and forcibly evinced the decay of the Hugonot power. Leſdiguieres was reduced to retreat before the duke of Mayenne in Dauphiné, and ſcarcely maintained himſelf among

Succeſs of the royal forces.

[32] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 387 and 395.

[33] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 225 and 226.

the

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1580.

the defiles and mountains of that inacceſſible province. The moderation and clemency of the duke towards his enemies, completed the progreſs of his arms. In Picardy, the prince of Condé not venturing to ſuſtain a ſiege in the city of La Fere, quitted France, and embarked for England, where he hoped to derive ſupplies from the policy of Elizabeth. Fruſtrated in his expectation, he croſſed over into Germany; and returning through Switzerland into Dauphiné, after ſurmounting numerous impediments, he joined the forces of Leſdiguieres. Meanwhile, the marſhal Matignon, at the head of an army, inveſted and beſieged La Fere. The camp was filled with the young nobility, who, in crouds, arrived from the court to ſignalize their proweſs. At their head, diſtinguiſhed by the ſplendor of their appearance and train, were the two favorites of Henry, Arques, and La Valette; better known in hiſtory by the titles of Joyeuſe, and Epernon. They had already attained to the pre-eminence in the king's affections, and were the channel of every grace or preferment. After ſuſtaining a ſiege of ſix weeks, the governor of La Fere capitulated on honorable conditions [34].

Siege of La Fere.

September.

The king of Navarre, who had imprudently engaged in a war ſo much above his ſtrength or reſources, was not more fortunate than his confederates. Unable to collect under his ſtandard, or to maintain in the field, any conſiderable body of troops; compelled to retire before marſhal Biron, who had paſſed the Garonne, and entered Gaſcony; deſtitute almoſt of a guard for the protection of his perſon, he was neceſſitated to take refuge in Nerac. Biron approached the place, drew up his army, and even fired ſome vollies of cannon againſt the town; while the queen of Navarre, like Helen on the walls of Troy, attended y the ladies of her court, occupied the watch towers and battlements, as ſpectators of the action. But, it was not the intention of the king of France to reduce to the laſt extremities, a prince ſo nearly

King of Navarre is purſued by Biron.

September.

[34] De Thou. vol. viii. p. 396 and 397. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 227. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 367—370.

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allied to him by blood and marriage, in whom he beheld the only counterpoiſe to the power of the Guiſes and the League. Biron, after diſplaying his force, withdrew from the vicinity of Nerac; and a fall, by which he was, for ſome time, rendered incapable of perſonally commanding the troops committed to his charge, tended to impede his further progreſs [35].

Concluſion of peace.

In this deſperate extremity of his affairs, the king of Navarre was ſaved by the interpoſition of the duke of Anjou. That prince having already accepted the offers of the ſtates general of the Netherlands, by which, on certain conditions, they agreed to delegate to him the ſovereignty, of which they had deprived Philip the Second; and anxious to obtain the aſſiſtance of the Hugonots, mediated their accommodation. The queen-mother, willing to aid the ambitious views of her youngeſt ſon, joined her powerful interceſſion; and Henry, who only deſired repoſe, eaſily conſented to open a treaty with his brother-in-law. It was conducted at the caſtle of Fleix, in Perigord, and ſuffered little impediment, or delay. The articles of the preceding peace were renewed with ſome variation; and France, after a war of only a few months, was reſtored to tranquillity [36].

November.

Affairs of the Low Countries.

No part of Europe, during this period, was ſo conſtantly deſolated, or ſubject to ſuch numerous and rapid revolutions, as the Netherlands. The Spaniſh affairs, which at the deceaſe of Don John of Auſtria, appeared to be almoſt beyond recovery, were ſpeedily retrieved by the vigor and capacity of the new governor general. Not diſcouraged by the total want of pecuniary reſources, by the general deſertion of the provinces, or by the ſuperior military force of the enemy; the prince of Parma ſupplied every defect, by the energy of his mind, the promptitude of his movements, and the ſuperiority of his genius.

Character of the prince of Parma.

[35] D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 364. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 389—393. Davila, p. 490 and 491.

[36] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 399. Davila, p. 491. D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 384. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 230.

Equally

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Equally fitted for the cabinet and for the field, his comprehenſive talents embraced either department. Severe in the camp, he was mild and gentle in every act of private life; and his clemency was ſtill more effectual in ſubduing, or regaining the Flemings, than his tranſcendent, military capacity. The ſtates of Brabant and Flanders having proceeded to form a new and cloſer union with the prince of Orange, for their mutual defence; the provinces of Haynault and Artois, apprehenſive of the complete ſubverſion of the Catholic religion, began to exhibit marks of a diſpoſition to return to the obedience of Philip the Second. Theſe favorable ſymptoms were encouraged and ultimately matured, by the wiſdom and prudence of the prince of Parma. At the ſame time that he undertook the ſiege of Maſtricht, in order more effectually to preclude the future entry of German armies into the Low Countries; he continued, and concluded a treaty, by which, on condition of diſmiſſing the Spaniſh troops, the Walloon provinces, comprehending Artois, Haynault, the city of Liſle, and ſeveral ſubordinate places, ſubmitted anew to Spain. Maſtricht, after a ſiege of four months, was entered by ſtorm, the garriſon and inhabitants, put to the ſword, and the city, completely reduced. The progreſs of the Spaniſh commander was aided by the diſſentions of the ſtates of Flanders, cauſed by religious diſputes; and his recent accommodation with the Walloons, ſhook the baſis of the independence of the Flemings. Having, not without extreme reluctance, and many delays, completed the evacuation of the Netherlands by the Spaniſh ſoldiery, in compliance with his engagements; he formed a new army with incredible celerity. La Noue, who commanded the combined forces of the States and of France, after performing the moſt diſtinguiſhed ſervices, was defeated, and taken priſoner. The Spaniards, who regarded themſelves as invincible under the prince of Parma, carried terror through every part of the Netherlands; and if Philip the Second had not, in his ardor to attain the crown of Portugal, withheld the neceſſary ſupplies of money from

The Walloon provinces return to the obedience of Spain.

Progreſs of the Spaniſh general.

June.

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from his general in the Low Countries; an univerſal ſubmiſſion of thoſe provinces to their antient ſovereign, might, probably, have been effected [37].

Treaty between the Flemings and the duke of Anjou.

Under theſe alarming circumſtances, the prince of Orange ſtrenuouſly exhorted the States, not to delay the concluſion of a treaty with the duke of Anjou, as the only competent barrier againſt the further inroads of the Spaniſh general. It was accelerated by the voluntary renunciation, on the part of the arch-duke Mathias, of the poſt of governor of the Netherlands, to which he had been called, and which he had, in effect, only nominally occupied. That prince, neglected by the Flemings, who had invited him; and poſſeſſing neither talents, authority, nor conſideration, withdrew ſoon afterwards into Germany. The definitive treaty between the duke of Anjou, and the ſtates of Brabant, Flanders, Holland, Zealand, and

Auguſt.

Friesland, with whom the cities of Antwerp and Mechlin were joined;

Articles of the treaty.

was finally adjuſted at the caſtle of Pleſſis, near Tours. The ſovereignty of thoſe rich and commercial provinces was conferred on him and his poſterity, on the condition of being annexed to, but, not incorporated in, the French monarchy; and with a reſervation of all their privileges and immunities. An army, to which the contracting parties agreed jointly to contribute, was to be immediately levied for their defence and protection. The peace between Henry the Third and his Hugonot ſubjects, was the conſequence of this treaty; and the duke of Anjou exerted every effort, to carry it into vigorous execution. He obtained the indirect approbation of the king, his brother, and iſſued orders to levy troops in every part of France [38].

Impediments to the progreſs of the duke of Anjou.

If the capacity of the French prince had been equal to his good fortune, a conſiderable portion of thoſe opulent and maritime countries, extending from the frontiers of Picardy and Champagne, to the

[37] Strada de Bel. Belg. vol. ii. p. 1—277. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 120—122, and 316—366.

[38] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 336. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 228 and 229.

mouth

mouth of the Weſer, might have been transferred to the houſe of Valois. But, the duke of Anjou, like his predeceſſor, the arch-duke Mathias, only repreſented the pageant of a ſovereign, and was unqualified to effect ſo vaſt and arduous an atchievement, as the expulſion of the Spaniards from the Netherlands. The eſſential authority reſided always in William, prince of Orange, whoſe depth of policy, and ſuperior talents, had already cemented his independant ſupremacy over the northern provinces, Holland and Zealand. Irritated againſt him to the higheſt degree, and juſtly regarding the meaſure of calling in the duke of Anjou, as his peculiar act, Philip the Second no longer impoſed any reſtraint on his indignation againſt his revolted ſubject. In a public manifeſto, diſperſed by his command throughout all Europe, he proſcribed the prince of Orange; ſtigmatized him with the epithets of traitor, rebel, and heretic; expoſed his eſtates to pillage; and finally offered a reward of twenty thouſand ducats, to any perſon who ſhould bring him dead or alive. William was neither terrified nor depreſſed by this proſcription, to which he replied by the apology that bears his name, and which in energy of compoſition is not inferior to the moſt celebrated works of antiquity. It was tranſmitted to the different European courts, and covered Philip with opprobrium, by the ſevere diſplay which it contained of his vices, crimes, and enormities [39].

1580.

June. Manifeſto of the king of Spain.

December.

While the fate of the Netherlands was ſtill uncertain, that of Portugal was already decided. The inſatiable ambition of Philip was gratified by the addition of a new kingdom, and of the rich colonies poſſeſſed by the Portugueze in Aſia. All the diſcoveries made by Gama, and the conqueſts effected by Albuquerque, were carried into the houſe of Auſtria, and loſt in the enormous maſs of the Spaniſh monarchy. The reign of the cardinal Henry, who had ſucceeded to the unfortunate Sebaſtian, was of ſhort continuance. He expired, after having nominally held the ſceptre only ſeventeen months. The

Affairs of Portugal.

January.

[39] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 362 and 363.

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period was, notwithſtanding, of ſufficient length, to have ſecured the independance of his country; and to have named a ſucceſſor, under whom Portugal might ſtill retain her exiſtence as a ſeparate monarchy. But, the feeble age, and procraſtinating or indeciſive character of Henry, inſtead of terminating the conteſt between the various candidates, left it open to litigation. Catherine, ducheſs of Braganza, daughter of a ſon of the great Emanuel, king of Portugal, appeared to poſſeſs a claim ſuperior to any other. It was, nevertheleſs, conteſted by Anthony, ſon to Don Louis, ſecond ſon of Emanuel; and whoſe title would have been indiſputable, if his illegitimacy had not excluded him from the throne. Even this circumſtance, which was not poſitively eſtabliſhed, might have been ſurmounted, if Henry had not conceived for his nephew the moſt implacable averſion. The crown of Portugal had been worn by John the Firſt, notwithſtanding a ſimilar defect in blood; and the people, who pretended to a right of deciſion, where the claim was a doubtful one, were almoſt unanimouſly attached to Anthony. But, the great endowments of every kind, which had raiſed John the Firſt to the throne, and maintained him in it during a long and victorious reign, were not to be found in his deſcendant. Philip the Second, at the head of all the forces of the Spaniſh monarchy, prepared to enter the liſts, as a competitor; and he had already, before the death of Henry, begun to aſſemble troops upon the frontiers [40].

Indeciſion of the cardinal king.

Unequal as was the conteſt, it could by no means be regarded as deſperate. The king of Spain, however powerful, had many impediments, internal and foreign, to prevent his exerting with vigor, the reſources that he poſſeſſed. In Arragon, and in Navarre, ſymptoms of diſaffection had appeared. Naples and Milan groaned under the Spaniſh tyranny; while the Netherlands, in open revolt, defied the power, and drained the revenues of Philip. If the Portu-

Condition of the Spaniſh monarchy at this period.

[40] La Clede, Hiſt. de Port. vol. ii. p. 72—89.

gueze

gueze had been united under any one leader, they might have rendered the attempt to ſubject the kingdom, difficult; perhaps, impoſſible. The frontiers towards Eſtremadura, where the Caſtilians muſt neceſſarily enter, were covered with fortreſſes, which would delay, or defeat their operations. The clergy, and the people, were zealouſly diſpoſed to maintain the independance of Portugal; and the nobility, though corrupted and ſeduced by the promiſes, or preſents of the Catholic king, did not want either valor, or patriotiſm. But, the diſſentions of the kingdom prevented every effort for its preſervation, and delivered it over, almoſt without reſiſtance, to the invaders. The duke of Braganza, timid, and unpopular, tamely bartered the rights which his wife poſſeſſed, and opened a negotiation with Philip. That artful prince did not loſe the occaſion of diſarming, and ſecuring ſo dangerous a rival. The five adminiſtrators, or regents, to whom the deceaſed king had committed by will, the government, till the conteſted ſucceſſion ſhould be finally determined, either ſold, or abandoned their truſt. No effectual opponent appeared, except Anthony; whoſe title was diſputable, and whoſe authority was not generally acknowledged. The duke of Alva, recalled from his caſtle, where he had been confined for ſome time, in a ſtate of diſgrace; aſſumed, at more than ſeventy years of age, the command of the army, deſtined to effect the conqueſt of Portugal. The high military reputation which he had acquired in Flanders; and, perhaps, the ſeverity of his diſpoſition, recommended him to a monarch, who, throughout the whole courſe of his reign, governed more by terror, than by affection. Wherever the Spaniſh commander appeared, treachery, fear, or diſaffection, opened to him the cities; and he penetrated, almoſt unoppoſed, to the gates of Liſbon itſelf. Having taken St. Ubes, one of the moſt important fortreſſes in the kingdom; and, afterwards, by a maſterly and rapid movement, having croſſed his forces over the Tagus, he prepared to inveſt the metropolis[41].

Diſſentions in the kingdom of Portugal.

Entrance of the duke of Alva into Portugal.

June.

His progreſs.

[41] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 89—120. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 221—270.

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Under theſe circumſtances of danger and depreſſion, Anthony did not abandon the conteſt; but, of the many perſonal qualities indiſpenſable to maintain him againſt ſo vaſt a diſparity, he poſſeſſed only courage. He even manifeſted a character deeply tinged with cruelty, treachery, and the moſt odious, or degrading vices. Incapable of commanding the ſervices, or compelling the attendance of the nobility; he truſted his cauſe to a licentious populace, who committed every act of violence with impunity, and deſolated the capital by their exceſſes. His army, deficient in diſcipline, and entirely compoſed of the vileſt of the people, inflamed by the exhortations of Monks, ſcarcely waited to be attacked by the duke of Alva; and after a ſhort reſiſtance, fled on all ſides. Liſbon inſtantly capitulated, and admitted the Spaniards; while Anthony, reduced to wander through the provinces, and concealed by his adherents, at length found means to embark from a kingdom, the misfortunes of which he had only aggravated, by an ineffectual oppoſition. After eluding every attempt which Philip made to gain poſſeſſion of his perſon, and receiving the moſt inconteſtable proofs of the diſintereſtedneſs and attachment of his countrymen, who diſdained the rewards offered by the court of Madrid, for his apprehenſion; he embarked with a few attendants, from St. Ubes, and landed ſafely in France[42].

Ineffectual efforts of the prior of Crato.

Auguſt.

His flight.

That country was liberated from one of its moſt formidable enemies, nearly at the ſame period, by the death of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. He expired in the vigor of his age, having only attained his fifty-ſecond year. Conſcious that the indolence and maladminiſtration of Henry the Third, were rapidly preparing a great revolution in his dominions; Emanuel Philibert already made diſpoſitions for profiting of the diſſentions of the kingdom. The death of Bellegarde had fruſtrated, or, at leaſt, poſtponed his deſigns, upon the marquiſate of Saluzzo; but, he did not renounce his projects of ſtill

Death of Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy.

Auguſt.

[42] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 121—128. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 271—280.

further

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His character.

further augmenting, and aggrandizing his power, at the expence of France. All his political and ambitious views ſurvived in his ſon, Charles Emanuel, who ſucceeded to his father's courage and genius, as well as to his territories. The ſixteenth century, fertile in illuſtrious princes, did not produce any more diſtinguiſhed, than Emanuel Philibert. His good fortune in re-eſtabliſhing himſelf in Savoy and Piedmont, from both of which his predeceſſor had been expelled, was equalled by his magnanimity, elevation of mind, and talents for government. If we except the intolerant and perſecuting ſpirit, which was more the vice of the age, than of the individual, and which ſtimulated him to undertake by violence, the converſion of his Proteſtant ſubjects; he was free from almoſt every defect, which could materially affect the happineſs of his people. His ſuperior military talents did not render him leſs diſpoſed to cultivate the arts of peace; and under his adminiſtration, uninterrupted tranquillity was preſerved throughout his dominions, while France, the Netherlands, and many of the fineſt countries of Europe were involved in all the calamities attendant on war. We may regard his reign as the era from which Savoy dates its political exiſtence; and the troubles by which France was ſoon afterwards agitated, enabled his ſucceſſor to adopt, and nearly to execute, the moſt extenſive projects of ambition [43].

[43] Guichenon, Hiſt. de Savoye, vol. ii. p. 696 and 697. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 230 and 231.

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Internal ſtate of France.—Profuſion, and mal-adminiſtration of the king.—Entry of the duke of Anjou into the Netherlands.—His firſt exploits.—He paſſes over into England.—Submiſſion of Portugal to Philip the Second.—The iſlands of the Azores adhere to Anthony.—Return of the duke of Anjou to Flanders.—Attempt to aſſaſſinate the prince of Orange, by Jaureguy.—Conſpiracy of Salcede.—Naval expedition to the Azores.—Defeat of Strozzi.—Operations in the Low Countries.—Attempt of the duke of Anjou, upon Antwerp.—Conſequences of it.—Retreat of that prince into France.—Indolence, and vices of Henry.—Inſtitution of the penitents.—Symptoms of an inſurrection in France.—Second enterprize againſt the Azores.—Progreſs of the prince of Parma in Flanders.—Death of the duke of Anjou.—Aſſaſſination, and character of the prince of Orange.

CHAP. IV.

1581. State of France, and of the court.

WHILE, on one hand, the duke of Anjou, having ratified the treaty with the Flemings, aſſembled his forces, in order to enter the Netherlands: and, while Philip the Second, in another quarter, prepared to take poſſeſſion of Portugal, already ſubjected; Henry, neither occupied by ſchemes of conqueſt, nor by ſyſtems of legiſlation, abandoned himſelf to a diſgraceful indolence. Equally inſenſible to the incitements of glory, or to the dictates of policy: neglectful of the intereſts, honor, and proſperity of France: improvident even of his own future repoſe, to the enjoyment of which, he made ſo many ſacrifices; he ſaw, without emotion, or effort, the formation of that ſtorm, in which he was eventually ſwallowed up and loſt. The partizans of "the League," reſerving for a more propitious moment, the full diſcloſure and execution of their plan, ſilently laboured to cement

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cement and conſolidate all its component parts. The ſterility of the queen of France, and the general opinion diffuſed among the people, of the inaptitude of the king for the duties of marriage, rendered the proſpect of the ſucceſſion uncertain. The duke of Anjou was not yet married; and, even if ſucceſsful in his ſuit to Elizabeth, queen of England, the age of that princeſs made it highly improbable that ſhe ſhould ever have iſſue. Henry, king of Navarre, was equally deſtitute of any legitimate offſpring; and his religion formed, of itſelf, an almoſt inſuperable obſtacle to his aſcending the throne. Profiting of ſo many concurring circumſtances, the duke of Guiſe, whoſe ambitious views already ſeem to have embraced the future attainment of the crown itſelf, as a poſſible event; began to diſcloſe a part of his vaſt and extenſive plan. Among the princes of the blood, Charles, cardinal of Bourbon, younger brother of Anthony, and uncle of Henry, kings of Navarre, occupied a diſtinguiſhed rank. Of a limited capacity, and a ſuperſtitious diſpoſition, he was yet by no means inſenſible to the allurements or ſeductions of ambition. Sinking in years, and precluded by the priority of his nephew's pretenſions, from any expectation of attaining to the ſovereignty of France, in caſe of the entire extinction of the reigning houſe of Valois; he lent a ready ear to the ſuggeſtions of the duke of Guiſe, who flattered him, that his adherence to the Catholic faith, rendered him the only prince whom the nation would permit to ſway the ſceptre. Won by theſe artifices, he forgot the antient enmity of his family to the Guiſes, and ſuffered himſelf to be made the dupe and inſtrument of all their purpoſes [1].

Projects of the duke of Guiſe.

He gains the confidence of the cardinal of Bourbon.

Amidſt ſuch various and augmenting ſources of confuſion, the king proſecuted his accuſtomed diverſions, and encreaſed his ordinary expences. The court was no longer filled with counſellors of ſtate, and antient nobility, as it had been under Henry the Second,

Profuſion, and miſconduct of the king.

[1] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 553.

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and Francis the Firſt. Young, and inſolent favourites, raiſed by Henry, and promoted to the higheſt dignities, military and civil, eclipſed, and expelled the natural attendants on his perſon. The indecent and unreſtrained marks of affection, proſtituted on theſe minions, excited indignation, and were attributed to the moſt diſgraceful motives. Not ſatisfied with raiſing Arques and La Valette, to the rank of dukes, and attempting to eſtabliſh their pre-eminence above the oldeſt peerages of the kingdom; he deſtined for them the two princeſſes of Vaudemont, allied to the houſe of Lorrain, and ſiſters to the queen. The firſt of the two matches was actually accompliſhed; and Henry preſented to the bride, the ſame portion which was uſually given to a princeſs of France, amounting to three hundred thouſand ducats. The marriage of the duke of Epernon was delayed, on account of the youth of the princeſs, intended for him; but, Henry did not leſs, by anticipation, order a ſum of equal magnitude to be paid to the future huſband. Enormous as ſuch prodigality appeared, it was loſt in the ſtill greater profuſion, exhibited at the celebration of Joyeuſe's nuptials, which exceeded twelve hundred thouſand ducats[2], and were ſolemnized with more than royal magnificence[3].

Minions of Henry.

Rapacity and oppreſſion of the government.

A diſſipation of the public treaſure, ſo odious in itſelf, and which ſeemed to impeach, not only the king's conduct, but, even the ſanity of his intellects, could not be ſupported, without laying adequate burthens on the people. Every onerous, and oppreſſive impoſition, which the pernicious ingenuity of Italian financiers could deviſe, was accumulated upon the ſubject. In defiance of the reluctance and oppoſition, manifeſted by the parliament of Paris, a number of new pecuniary edicts, not ſhort of twenty-ſeven, were regiſtered in one day. By a ſingle edict of the liſt, twenty places of counſellors were created, in addition to thoſe already exiſting. Henry was neceſſitated to appear in perſon, in order to vanquiſh the repugnance of

July.

[2] A ſum equal to five hundred thouſand pounds ſterling.

[3] Etoile, Journ. d'Henry III. p. 130. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 550 and 551.

the

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the parliament to ſanctify ſuch violation of juſtice and good government. To ſupply his exceſſes, and the rapacity of his favorites, venality was openly introduced into the magiſtrature, the courts of juſtice, and all the dignities or offices of the kingdom. The patience of the nation, wantonly trampled on, began to be nearly exhauſted; and even thoſe, whoſe loyalty and attachment to the crown remained unſhaken, yet foreſaw with apprehenſion the neceſſary conſequence of the vices and profligacy of the ſovereign [3].

Exploits of the prince of Parma, in the Netherlands.

During theſe tranſactions in France, the Netherlands exhibited a more animating and important ſcene, on which the attention of Europe was fixed. The ſuperior talents and activity of the prince of Parma began gradually to re-eſtabliſh on a ſolid baſis, the Spaniſh power, in all the provinces to the ſouth of the Schelde and the Maeſe. His inviolable fidelity to his engagements, added to the ſeverity of his diſcipline, and his conſummate military ſkill, rendered his troops invincible. Having taken Breda, and cloſely inveſted Cambray, the ſtates of Flanders and Brabant, terrified at the rapidity of his progreſs, loudly invoked the duke of Anjou to accelerate his march to their aſſiſtance. That prince, having, at length, aſſembled a body of near ten thouſand infantry, and four thouſand cavalry, entered Artois, and advanced to the relief of Cambray, which had already ſuffered the preſſure of famine. At his approach, the Spaniſh commander, whoſe forces were very inferior in number to thoſe of the French; after having remained for ſome hours in order of battle, decamped, and retreated towards Bouchain. The event juſtified this cautious meaſure, to which, in ſome degree, may be attributed the ſubſequent ill ſucceſs of the duke of Anjou. His army, principally compoſed of volunteers, and adventurers, equipped for a ſhort and vigorous expedition, and who received no regular pay, was unfit for enterprizes of duration. Licentious, undiſciplined, and ſubſiſting principally by plunder, they alienated the people, to whoſe

Duke of Anjou enters Artois.

Auguſt.

State of his army.

[3] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 233—236. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 550.

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aid they were arrived; and disbanded, when weary of the campaign [4].

The first success of the duke of Anjou was, notwithstanding, such as to awaken the sanguine expectations of his new subjects. He made his triumphal entry into Cambray, as a conqueror, and was received by the inhabitants as their liberator from slavery. The command of the place and of the citadel was conferred by him on Balagny, one of his followers. Pursuing his advantages, he drove the enemy from Arleux and Ecluse, besieged and captured Cateau in Cambresis, and seemed to be ready to penetrate into Brabant. If he could have effected his junction with the forces of the States and of the prince of Orange, so great a superiority might have enabled him to give battle to the prince of Parma, under circumstances highly favorable. But, already, his soldiers, disgusted with the delays and impediments interposed to their progress; impressed with little respect, or confidence in their commander; and disdaining all subordination, had deserted their standards. Apprehensive in his turn of being attacked by an enemy, whose vigilance and promptitude were fully known; he retired towards the French frontiers, having lost more than half his cavalry, and nearly an equal number of infantry. Incapable of renewing the attempt on Flanders, and still occupied by his pursuit of Elizabeth, he quitted his army, and passed over into England; to which court Henry the Third had dispatched a magnificent embassy, in the view of facilitating his brother's nuptials. During his absence, the prince of Parma, no longer restrained by the operations of so formidable an opponent, invested Tournay, rendered himself master of the place, after a siege of two months, and spread consternation over every part of Flanders and Brabant [5].

His entrance into Cambray.

His troops disband.

September.

Duke of Anjou passes over into England.

November.

[4] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 238.

[5] Strada, vol. iii. p. 278—358. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 519—521. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 236—238.

Brilliant

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Brilliant as was the ſucceſs of Philip's arms in the Netherlands, conducted by his lieutenants; it was ſurpaſſed by the facility, with which, in his own perſon, he completed the ſubjection of the Portugueze. Wherever he appeared, the moſt profound obedience was manifeſted; and in the aſſembly of the ſtates of the kingdom, held at Tomar, he was proclaimed king, with all the accuſtomed ſolemnities. The crown was declared to be hereditary in his family: an amneſty, from which Anthony, and his principal adherents were excluded, was publiſhed; and the privileges of the nation were confirmed. Continuing his progreſs, the new king entered Liſbon, was inaugurated with pomp, and received by the fickle and credulous populace, with loud acclamations. His deportment, and meaſures on his acceſſion, were calculated to ſooth the diſcontent, and to allay the apprehenſions of his ſubjects. The duke of Braganza was treated with external marks of conſideration: the univerſity of Coimbra, which had diſtinguiſhed itſelf by the warmeſt oppoſition to Philip's claims, received, notwithſtanding, teſtimonies of his protection and forgiveneſs. Honors, and employments, were conferred, though with a ſparing hand, on ſome of the grandees; and the adminiſtration was veſted in miniſters of talents and diſcernment [6].

1581. Reduction of Portugal to the obedience of Philip the Second.

April.

June. Philip enters Liſbon.

Throughout the vaſt dependencies of Portugal, in Aſia, Africa, and on the ſouthern continent of America, no oppoſition was made to a revolution, which reduced the kingdom to a province of the Spaniſh monarchy. The numerous colonies on the coaſt of Guinea; the garriſons on the ſhore of Barbary; Madeira, and the iſlands of Cape Verd, ſubmitted without a murmur. Ataide, viceroy of the Indies, who might have repelled the utmoſt efforts of Philip, acknowledged his title; and the rich fleet returning from Goa, entered the Tagus, and brought to the Spaniſh monarch an immenſe acceſſion of wealth,

Submiſſion of the Portugueze colonies.

[6] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 129—132. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 482—489.

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at a juncture the moſt critical. Amidſt ſo aſtoniſhing and general a ſubmiſſion, the iſlands of the Azores alone ventured to refuſe obedience to Philip; and with the exception of only one, adhered inflexibly to his competitor. Their poſition in the Atlantic, nearly midway between the old, and the new world; together with the utility derived from the refreſhments and ſhelter, which they afforded to the fleets from the Indies and Braſil, on their homeward-bound voyages; rendered their poſſeſſion highly important. Philip, too wiſe not to be fully ſenſible of their value; and too vigilant to loſe a moment in attempting to reduce them; ſent a ſquadron, commanded by Valdez, followed by a ſecond, under Figueroa, to effect their conqueſt. But, the expeditions were completely unſucceſsful. Valdez, repulſed in an attack upon Angra, capital of the iſland of Tercera, was reduced to fly before the inhabitants, after having ſuſtained a conſiderable loſs. Elated by their victory, they proceeded to the moſt violent exceſſes of rage againſt the Spaniards; nor did Figueroa, diſcouraged by the recent defeat of his predeceſſor, venture to renew the experiment. He returned, therefore, to Liſbon, in order to demand ſupplies; while the inſurgents diſpatched meſſengers to Anthony, then in the court of France, to aſſure him of their inviolable adherence, and to preſs for inſtant ſuccour [7].

1581. The iſlands of the Azores remain firm to Anthony.

Repulſe of Valdez.

1582. Conſequences of the duke of Anjou's viſit to England.

The viſit of the duke of Anjou to England, was not accompanied with greater ſucceſs, than had attended his former attempt to attain the hand of Elizabeth. She received him with every demonſtration of amity, and affection; permitted the articles reſpecting their future nuptials, to be diſcuſſed; and even proceeded ſo far as to preſent him with a ring, in token of her fidelity and conſent. But, theſe deceptive appearances, calculated to anſwer the political purpoſes of the queen, and to retard, or prevent an alliance between the French prince and a daughter of Philip the Second; were laid aſide, when

[7] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 132—135. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 490—494.

the

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the object was attained. Wearied, if not diſguſted with perpetual procraſtination; and preſſed by the importunity of the prince of Orange, to reviſit the Netherlands, where his preſence was ſo neceſſary; he took leave of Elizabeth. Eſcorted by the Engliſh fleet, and attended by a number of the nobility, he ſet ſail for the port of Fluſhing, in Zealand; and after having made a ſhort ſtay at Middleburg, capital of the province, he proceeded by ſea, to Antwerp. In that city, he was ſolemnly inveſted with the dignity of duke of Brabant. The States ſwore allegiance to him as their rightful ſovereign, and delegated to him the prerogatives exerciſed by their antient maſters. He, in return, took an oath to govern by the eſtabliſhed laws, and to reſpect inviolably all their privileges [s].

1582. He returns to Flanders.

February.

His inveſtiture.

The general joy, diffuſed by this happy event, which promiſed their entire emancipation from the tyranny of Philip the Second, was, notwithſtanding, interrupted, and nearly extinguiſhed, by an attempt to aſſaſſinate the prince of Orange. Jaureguy, a young Biſcayan, allured on one hand, by the rewards which the king of Spain offered; and ſtimulated by religious enthuſiaſm, on the other; undertook to execute ſo deteſtable a deed. Having choſen the moment when the prince, accompanied by his friends, had riſen from table, and was preparing to withdraw into his own apartment, he diſcharged a piſtol ball, which entering under his right ear, paſſed through his cheek. The wound, though ſevere, was not mortal: but, the aſſaſſin having been put to death by thoſe who were preſent, in the firſt tranſports of their indignation; a ſuſpicion that the French, and even the duke of Anjou himſelf, had authorized the commiſſion of the act, ſpread univerſally through Antwerp. The citizens, who idolized the prince of Orange, ran inſtantly to arms, and were on the point of taking vengeance on the ſovereign whom they had recently elected, before it could be aſcertained from what quarter the

Attempt to aſſaſſinate the prince of Orange.

March.

[s] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 600—605. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 240.

blow

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blow had been aimed. Two accomplices of Jaureguy, Spaniards as well as himſelf, were either ſeized and executed, or took refuge in the prince of Parma's camp. The prince of Orange recovered of his wound; and the conſternation, occaſioned by it, inſenſibly diſappeared [9].

Campaign in the Netherlands.

Meanwhile, the campaign which began to open, produced no events deciſive of the fate of the Netherlands. The Spaniſh general, notwithſtanding his conſummate knowledge of the art of war, was reſtrained by the want of forces, from undertaking to attack the enemy. Nor did the duke of Anjou, whoſe troops were with difficulty retained under their ſtandards, venture to hazard an engagement againſt a commander, whoſe reputation inſpired terror and reſpect. In this ſituation, the prince of Parma, profiting with dexterity of the inroads made by the French on the provinces of Artois and Haynault, and of their inability to provide for their own defence without foreign aſſiſtance; obtained the conſent of the nobility to demand from Philip the Second, the recal of the Spaniſh bands. Their requeſt was eagerly granted by the court of Madrid; while the duke of Anjou, with equal impatience, expected a powerful reinforcement from France, under the conduct of the duke of Montpenſier [10].

State of France.

That kingdom, ſince the treaty concluded with the Hugonots, continued to enjoy a fallacious and precarious repoſe, interrupted at intervals, by diſturbances between the Catholics and Proteſtants, irritated againſt each other. The king, faintly actuated by ſentiments of national glory, rather permitted, than approved, or ſupported, the enterprizes of his brother. Too indolent, and too timid, to venture on ſo deciſive a meaſure as an open rupture with the Spaniſh monarch; he was ſtill induced to lend an indirect aſſiſtance to every effort, which might impede, or overturn the courſe of Philip's proſperity. Deſtitute of pecuniary reſources; devoured by rapacious favorites; and

Indolence of the king.

[9] Strada, vol. iii. p. 366—370. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 608—614.

[10] Strada, vol. iii. p. 370—377. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 607 and 608.

little

little inclined to ſacrifice his own tranquillity, to the gratification of the duke of Anjou's ambitious views in Flanders; Henry liſtened with coldneſs to his ſolicitations, and affected to maintain a ſtrict neutrality. But, the king of Spain was neither deceived by his proteſtations, nor mollified by his conduct. Taxis, his embaſſador at the court of France, had already entered into the deepeſt and moſt criminal intrigues, with the princes of the family of Guiſe; and an event, which took place at this period, diſcloſed in their full extent, the enormity and treaſonable nature of their deſigns.

Conſpiracy of Salcede.

Among the numerous adventurers, whom the proſpect of honor or advantage, attracted to the duke of Anjou's court, at Bruges in Flanders, was Nicholas Salcede. He was of Spaniſh extraction, had been compelled to fly from France on account of his crimes, and might juſtly be ſuſpected of adherence to the enemies of that country. But, Salcede having offered to the duke, a regiment, levied at his own expence, and ready to join the French troops; was received with careſſes, and treated with diſtinction. The prince of Orange, whoſe vigilant and penetrating mind was ever awake to the events that paſſed around him; and who had diſcovered that Salcede, on his way to Bruges, viſited the prince of Parma's camp; firſt entertained doubts concerning his intentions. Enquiry confirmed them; and ſome other indications of his guilt appearing, he was arreſted, committed to priſon, and ſtrictly interrogated. His voluntary confeſſion, made in preſence of the duke of Anjou, revealed a plot ſo vaſt, complicated, and which involved in it ſuch a number of eminent perſons in the court of France, that it was judged indiſpenſable to communicate the information to Henry the Third[11]. That prince, equally terrified and aſtoniſhed at a diſcloſure, which ſo nearly affected his own ſafety, cauſed Salcede to be tranſported to Paris, with every requiſite precaution. On the arrival of the criminal,

July. His confeſſion.

[11] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 569—573.

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the king directed judges to examine him, and was even preſent himſelf, concealed behind a curtain, when he was put to the torture. He varied at different times, in his depoſitions; denied, retracted, and again confirmed his original aſſertions; leaving the king and all his miniſters, in a ſtate of uncertainty as to the exact truth of many eſſential circumſtances, reſpecting the conſpiracy. But, the exiſtence and reality of a plot, which had for its object the dethronement of Henry, the extermination of the royal family, the introduction of the Spaniards, and the complete deſtruction of the French monarchy; was apparent and demonſtrated. It was equally clear, that the Guiſes, in conjunction with the duke of Lorrain, were its immediate authors: that Philip the Second ſupported it with all his treaſures: that many provinces of the kingdom were engaged in it; and that meaſures were embraced for carrying it into prompt and vigorous execution. Any other prince than Henry, after ſo minute a diſcloſure of the pernicious ſchemes of his domeſtic, and foreign enemies, would have exerted ſome vigilance, in endeavouring to prevent their further progreſs. But, ſuch was his credulous and ſupine ſecurity, that, when his firſt impreſſions of terror had ſubſided, he reſumed his ordinary courſe of amuſements, and took no meaſure for averting the danger with which he was menaced [12].

Security of Henry.

This

[12] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 621—636. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 242—244. Buſbeq. de Bong. letter 8th.

The moſt curious and intereſting detail of Salcede's conſpiracy, is to be found in De Thou. It is impoſſible, on a full conſideration of all the circumſtances, to doubt that the duke of Guiſe had communicated to Salcede the leading facts, reſpecting the future projects of "the League." Not only a number of perſons of the higheſt quality were enumerated by him, as acquainted with, or implicated in, the treaſonable deſigns againſt the king, and kingdom: but, even ſeveral of thoſe, who had been raiſed, and peculiarly favoured by Henry. Among theſe, was the duke of Joyeuſe himſelf. Salcede's retractation may impugn the truth of ſome facts: but, cannot deſtroy the evidence of a deep and dangerous intention to ſubvert the monarchy, and deliver up France to Philip the Second. The conduct of the duke of Guiſe, and the ſubſequent diſcloſure of the principles of his adherents, bear the ſtrongeſt teſtimony to the general veracity of Salcede's depoſitions. The advice given to Henry, by Chriſtopher de Thou, father to the celebrated hiſtorian, and who, as firſt preſident of the parliament of Paris, was preſent at the examination

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1582. Enterprize againſt the Azores.

This fatal and inexplicable apathy was the more cenſurable, as, notwithſtanding his affectation of obſerving inviolate the peace with Spain, he had attempted to wound the Spaniſh monarchy in its moſt vulnerable quarter. Anthony, who claimed the crown of Portugal, after embarking from a kingdom in which his affairs were deſperate, obtained not only an aſylum, but, a ſupport, from the generoſity of the French king. As his party ſtill ſubſiſted in the iſlands of the Azores, he earneſtly ſolicited a naval and military force, to effect their complete reduction; and from thence, to make, with advantage, a new attempt to eject Philip from his recent conqueſt. Catherine of Medecis, whoſe predominant paſſion was ambition, and who had not even heſitated, on grounds the moſt abſurd, to lay claim, herſelf, to the kingdom of Portugal; obtained leave from Henry, to equip in her own name, an armament adequate to the enterprize.

tion of the criminal, was full of wiſdom and ſagacity. That virtuous and upright magiſtrate beſought of the king, to detain Salcede in confinement, and by no means to put him to death. "If," ſaid he, "the intentions "attributed to the duke of Guiſe and his "partizans, are falſe, their future conduct "will beſt evince their innocence: but, if the "allegations of Salcede are true, they will be "retained in awe, by the conſciouſneſs of a "witneſs being alive, who is acquainted with, "and can divulge the extent of their crimi-"nal projects." Henry was incapable of feeling, or of following, ſo judicious a mode of action. His indolence, and averſion to trouble, made him deſire to forget a ſubject of ſuch unpleaſing reflexion; and thoſe of his favorites, or miniſters, who had been involved in the accuſation, urged the puniſhment of a traitor and calumniator. He was torn in pieces by horſes, and the king was preſent at his execution.

The death of the firſt preſident, de Thou, who only ſurvived this event ſeven days, was accelerated, if not occaſioned, by a deep and melancholy ſenſe of the calamities, which he foreſaw were about to overwhelm France; but, which he could not avert. It was in vain, that he warned Henry of the approaching and imminent danger: that infatuated monarch was deaf to his ſuggeſtions, or exhortations. De Thou, only a few months preceding, had, with a generous and manly boldneſs, withſtood ſome of the oppreſſive taxes, continually impoſed by the king; and he had the courage to warn him, that "if thoſe ruinous experiments "were repeated, a revolt would be the infal-"lible conſequence." Henry, turning to his courtiers, by whom he was ſurounded; ſaid, with contempt, "the poor old man is in "his dotage." But, when, only a few years afterwards, the ſedition of Paris began to manifeſt itſelf, he diſcovered the irreparable loſs which he had ſuſtained in de Thou. He deplored it with tears; and while, on every ſide, he only beheld treachery, rebellion, ingratitude, and perfidy, he was frequently heard to exclaim, that "he was well perſuaded, if "the firſt preſident had been alive, and at "the head of the parliament, an inſurrec-"tion would never have taken place in the "capital."

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Naval force equipped, and ſent to thoſe iſlands.

A conſiderable fleet, on board of which were five thouſand ſoldiers, was fitted out from the harbours of France. The command was entruſted to Philip Strozzi, one of the moſt intrepid and accompliſhed officers in the French ſervice; and not only Anthony himſelf, but, a number of the young nobility eagerly crouded to partake of the honor and danger of the expedition.

Spaniſh fleet fitted out by Philip.

Philip, attentive to all the motions of ſo formidable a ſquadron, inſtantly prepared to meet it with an equal, or ſuperior force. The marquis of Santa Croix ſailed from the Tagus, at the head of a numerous and well-appointed fleet, nearly about the ſame period of time that Strozzi quitted the coaſt of Brittany: but, the French arriving firſt at the place of their deſtination, landed on the iſland of St. Michael, defeated a body of Spaniards, gained poſſeſſion of the principal town, and drove the enemy to take refuge in the citadel. If the favorable moment had been vigorouſly improved, and the garriſon, which was in want of proviſions, had not been allowed to recover from their conſternation, Anthony might have been maſter of the fortreſs. Its conſequence and importance were beyond calculation; the iſland of St. Michael being the only one which remained attached to Philip; and the Spaniſh fleet poſſeſſing no other port, or place of refreſhment and retreat. Unfortunately, the occaſion was loſt, while Anthony amuſed himſelf by liſtening to the acclamations of a populace, who ſaluted him king; and the arrival of Santa Croix, in a few days, ſoon changed the aſpect of affairs [13].

June.

15th July.

Succeſs of the French.

22d July.

Naval victory of the Spaniards.

An engagement became unavoidable between the two fleets, and it was expected by both with equal impatience. The conteſt was long and obſtinate, as the prize was not leſs than the kingdom of Portugal. Strozzi behaved with the utmoſt valour; and if he had been ſuſtained with the ſame firmneſs, muſt have obtained a deciſive victory. But, the ſuperior magnitude of the enemy's ſhips, and the

[13] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 135—139. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 578—584.

ſeverity

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severity of their fire; added to the treachery, or cowardice of several French commanders, who never came into action, determined the fate of the day. Strozzi, wounded in the knee, and incapable of resistance, was presented to the Spanish admiral, who had the inhumanity to order him to be dispatched, and his body to be thrown into the sea. Two thousand of the French were killed, and eight of their vessels were captured, on this memorable occasion. But, the cruelty, exercised by the marquis of Santa Croix, on the prisoners, who survived, and who fell into his hands; while it tarnished so brilliant an atchievement, stamped indelible infamy on his name and nation. These unfortunate victims, to the number of near three hundred, among whom were many persons of quality and reputation, were conducted to Villa Franca, in the island of St. Michael. A scaffold having been constructed in the town, they were all deliberately put to death, with no other distinction, except that the officers were beheaded, while the common soldiers suffered by the halter. To palliate, or justify an act of such turpitude, the admiral pretended to consider the French as only pirates, or corsairs, acting without any legitimate commission, and wantonly infringing the peace subsisting between the two kings. Even his own troops could not acquiesce in so base and savage a proceeding: they demanded with importunity and tears, that the French might be treated as prisoners of war; but, Santa Croix, inexorable, delivered them over to the executioners; and Philip expressed neither horror, nor indignation, when he received the intelligence [14].

1582. 26th July.

Cruelties, exercised by the Spanish admiral.

It was the first general engagement, fought between any European nations, on the Atlantic, since the discovery of America, by Columbus; and its consequences were decisive of the fate of Portugal. Anthony, who had not been personally present in the action, took refuge in the island of Tercera, which still adhered to his cause. Inconsolable on hearing the news of Strozzi's defeat, he only recovered from the transports

Incapacity of Anthony.

[14] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 139—142. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 247—249. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 585—593.

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ports of his grief, to plunge into the moſt degrading exceſſes of vice and ſenſuality. After remaining near two months in this ſtate, irreſolute as to his future conduct, and deſtitute of all reſource, he embarked a ſecond time, for France: the Spaniſh admiral, ſatisfied with his victory, and cautious of remaining too long in an expoſed ſituation, returned in triumph to Liſbon [15].

October.

Affairs of the Low Countries.

While theſe great events were performed upon the ocean, hoſtilities continued uninterruptedly in the Netherlands. Reinforced by the Spaniſh and Italian veterans, the prince of Parma took the field at the head of thirty thouſand troops, and attempted to oppoſe the entry of the French, who, under Montpenſier and Biron, having embarked from Calais, had joined the duke of Anjou, at Dunkirk. The reinforcement which they conducted, did not fall ſhort of eight thouſand infantry and cavalry, compoſed of Switzers and Germans, as well as of the forces of France. The Spaniſh general nevertheleſs, did not heſitate to give them battle; and even under the cannon of Ghent, to which they retired, he obtained a conſiderable advantage: but, the approach of winter, and the difficulty of ſubſiſting two armies in a country already exhauſted, produced an involuntary ceſſation of hoſtilities.

Hoſtilities.

Auguſt.

Critical ſtate of the Netherlands.

Notwithſtanding the exertions made by Philip, to enable the prince of Parma to puſh the war with vigor, and the great augmentations of ſoldiery which he had received, he found himſelf involved in almoſt inſurmountable embarraſſments. The court of Madrid, attentive to the preſervation of Portugal, and occupied in the Azores, did not remit to the Low Countries, ſufficient ſums for the payment of the numerous forces acting in that quarter. The provinces of Haynault and Artois, from which the principal ſupplies of proviſions were derived, could no longer furniſh reſources. Famine deſolated the Spaniſh camp, and reduced its numbers; while the duke of Anjou, maſter of the rich tract extending from Ghent to Antwerp, and receiving

[15] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 250.

ceiving conſtant ſuccors from England and France by means of the ſea, was not expoſed to ſimilar diſtreſs; and might open the enſuing campaign with a proſpect of deciſive advantages. But, all theſe flattering appearances, which would probably have been realized in a few months, were completely overturned by his own raſhneſs, folly, and preſumption [16]. CHAP. IV. 1582.

Henry the Third, who, on account of the danger with which he was perſonally menaced by the conſpiracy of Salcede, rather than from public conſiderations, had evinced ſome degree of emotion, at that event; was little affected by the defeat and cataſtrophé of Strozzi. Inſenſible to national glory or ſhame, he neither betrayed reſentment, nor attempted to take vengeance for ſo cruel an outrage. Equally indiſpoſed to embrace the favorable occaſion which preſented itſelf, for diminiſhing the power of Philip in the Netherlands; he refuſed to liſten to the entreaties and ſolicitations of his brother, who implored his aſſiſtance. The duke of Anjou had already expended his revenues, and even contracted an immenſe debt, in the proſecution of his enterprize in Flanders. Every motive of affection, honor, and intereſt, dictated to the king to ſupport him in an attempt, ſo beneficial to France, and ſo injurious to Spain. He was well aware, that the court of Madrid, far from reſpecting either alliances of blood, or the faith of treaties, had kindled, and continued to feed the flame of civil diſſention in his own dominions. Even the laws of nations, and of humanity, had been violated in the treatment of the unfortunate priſoners, taken at the Azores. Yet, ſo many conſiderations could not rouſe him to exertion, nor induce him to quit the diſgraceful and ruinous ſloth, in which he was ſunk. Far from extending the neceſſary aid to his brother, which might have enabled him to become maſter of the Netherlands, and to encloſe the prince of Parma between two ſuperior armies; his favorites dictated to him a language

1583. Apathy of Henry.

His neglect of the duke of Anjou.

[16] Strada, vol. iii. p. 394—407. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 640—646. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 252 and 253.

of

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of inſult, in all his replies. The new duke of Brabant was adviſed to take warning by the fate of his predeceſſor, Mathias; who, after having been invited by the Flemings, to aſſume their government and protection, had been diſgracefully ſent back to Vienna. It was added, that when the duke had repreſſed the inſolent audacity of his ſubjects, extended the narrow limits of his authority, and ſecured its permanency by the ſeizure of ſome fortreſſes or cities of Flanders; it might then be expedient and practicable, to mix the ſovereign and kingdom of France in his quarrel [17].

Condition of that prince's affairs.

Inſinuations and exhortations of ſuch a nature, however originating in averſion or contempt, found too eaſy an acceſs to the heart of a prince, corrupted by flattery, wounded by refuſals, and ſtimulated by neceſſity. On repeated occaſions, he had experienced the inſolence of the Flemings; and at the aſſaſſination of the prince of Orange by Jaureguy, his own perſon, and thoſe of all his countrymen, had been in the moſt imminent peril, from the ſuſpicions entertained of his having authorized, or permitted the attempt. Continual diſputes and altercations aroſe between the French and their allies; who, far from coaleſcing cordially, though engaged in one common purſuit, regarded each other almoſt as enemies. The duke himſelf, ſurrounded by unprincipled and profligate men, who continually held up to him the compariſon between the unlimited prerogative of a king of France, and the contracted power delegated to him as duke of Brabant; inflamed and propelled him to encreaſe it by every means.

He determines to ſeize on the principal cities of Flanders.

Yielding to theſe natural, but, pernicious ſuggeſtions, he, without communicating his deſign to Montpenſier, or Biron, who might have diſſuaded him from ſo treacherous a breach of faith; gave orders to ſeize, on the ſame day, a number of places in Flanders. The enterprize was facilitated by the confidence repoſed in the French, as

[17] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 253 and 254.

auxiliaries; and it was completely ſucceſsful in the towns of Dunkirk, Dixmude, Aloſt, Menin, Vilvorden, and Dendermonde: but, at Oſtend, and at Bruges, the conſpiracy was rendered abortive. Having reſerved to himſelf the conduct of the attempt upon Antwerp, as the moſt important and arduous, he marched out of the city on the day appointed, under the pretence of reviewing his forces, who were encamped in the neighbourhood. When he had reached the gate, the officers who accompanied him, began the onſet; and the duke continuing his route to the camp, exhorted the troops to enter Antwerp, and to make themſelves maſters of the place. They obeyed with alacrity; and while their comrades ſeized on the cannon, they puſhed forward to ſhare in the pillage of ſo opulent a city. But, their own ſecurity was fatal to the enterprize; and ſome ſuſpicions having been previouſly entertained of an intention to introduce the French, the citizens ſounded the alarm, and roſe in arms. The prince of Orange, who occupied the citadel, informed of the event, put himſelf at the head of a body of ſoldiers, attacked Fervaques, who commanded the duke of Anjou's troops, took him priſoner, and committed him to cuſtody. Diſpirited by the loſs of their chief, his followers gave way on all ſides; and as the croud was ſuch at the gate by which they had originally entered, that it became impoſſible to retreat, a prodigious ſlaughter enſued. Numbers were ſuffocated by the preſſure of their companions; and it was long, before the rage of the people, juſtly excited by ſuch an act of perfidy, permitted any quarter to be extended. Yet, equally placable when all further reſiſtance had ceaſed, they evinced the utmoſt humanity in the treatment ſhewn to the wounded, and preſerved the ſurvivors from injury. About one hundred citizens fell in the affray; but on the other ſide, more than twelve hundred individuals periſhed, among whom were many perſons of diſtinction [18].

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1583. 18th January.

Attempt upon Antwerp;

unſucceſsful.

Carnage of the French.

[18] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 32—40. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 255—258. Buſbeq. de Pongars, letters 14 and 15. Strada, vol. iii. p. 412—425.

During

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Conduct of the duke of Anjou.

During the commiſſion of this tragical ſcene, the duke of Anjou, little prepared for its iſſue, remained at an inconſiderable diſtance from the walls, and already anticipated the poſſeſſion of Antwerp. He was accompanied by his principal officers, many of whom highly condemned the proceeding, as equally diſhonorable and deſtructive. The cannon of the city, pointed againſt him, and the ſight of numbers of French, who precipitated themſelves from the ramparts, in order to effect their eſcape, conveyed to the duke the firſt intelligence of the ill ſucceſs of his attempt. Confuſed, and covered with ſhame, he inſtantly withdrew to his camp; from whence he diſpatched letters to the States, extenuating the act; imputing it to the treatment which he had received, and the indignities that he had ſuffered; proteſting his affection for the Flemings, and his repentance for the attack made on their freedom. No anſwer was returned; nor would the Senate, though urged by the prince of Orange to ſend ſupplies of proviſions to the French army, permit any to be conveyed for ſeveral days. Such was their indignation, that they even cauſed the ſluices to be opened, inundated the whole country, and thereby reduced the duke to the laſt extremity of danger and famine.

He retreats to Dendermonde.

He was compelled, by a circuitous and hazardous march, to gain Dendermonde, where he did not arrive, without having loſt many of his ſoldiers [19].

Conſequence of theſe proceedings.

The conſternation, and reſentment, excited in Flanders and Brabant, by ſo daring an invaſion of their liberties, from a quarter to which the people naturally looked for protection and ſupport, was general, and difficult to eraſe. Its effects were as ſubverſive of the independance of thoſe provinces, as they were ruinous to the newly-acquired dominion of the duke of Anjou. Mutual confidence between the two nations, was not only extinct; but, enmity and rancour ſubſiſted in their place. The prince of Parma, relieved by ſo unex-

[19] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 40—44.

pected

pected an interpoſition of fortune, from his pecuniary diſtreſſes, and from the difficulty of taking the field againſt ſuperior forces; profited of the event, to open a negotiation with the revolted cities, and offered them in the name of their antient ſovereign, an amneſty for every offence, together with the moſt favorable conditions. Theſe propoſals, operating on minds inflamed by recent injury, and implacable againſt their late allies, were eventually productive of no inconſiderable effect [20]. CHAP. IV. 1583.

Efforts made to effect a reconciliation.

Every effort was, notwithſtanding, made to heal the wound, and to prevent the fatal conſequences of a final rupture between the two parties. Henry the Third himſelf, alarmed at the effects which ſuch an event might occaſion, by the contumely and degradation in which it involved the name and nation of France, ſent embaſſadors to mediate an accommodation. The prince of Orange, although included perſonally in the attempt of the duke of Anjou, which was levelled as much againſt him, as againſt the city of Antwerp; yet, diſplayed equal magnanimity and wiſdom, in the advice given by him to the States. In a beautiful and maſterly addreſs, he enumerated the dangers annexed to every other mode of conduct; the impoſſibility of ſubmitting anew to Philip the Second; the inability of the Flemings to maintain a conteſt with ſo powerful a monarch, unleſs aſſiſted by foreign ſtates; and the prodigious advantages derived from the cooperation and ſupport of a French prince, preſumptive heir to the crown. Theſe weighty conſiderations, added to the danger of the duke's delivering up to the Spaniards the places of which he was in poſſeſſion, if driven to deſpair, produced a treaty; but, could not obliterate the recollection of ſo perfidious a breach of honor and humanity. It was ſtipulated, that he ſhould repair immediately to Dunkirk, there to await a final reconciliation; and that Dendermonde, as well as Dixmude, ſhould be ſurrendered to the States;

2d April. Treaty of oblivion concluded.

[20] Strada, vol. iii. p. 426—433. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 43 and 44.

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who, on their parts, engaged to reſtore his baggage, and all the priſoners taken at Antwerp, without ranſom. A mutual oblivion of every paſt event, formed the concluding article of the accommodation [21].

Reſentment of the Flemings.

The terms were executed on the part of the duke, without delay; but, the States manifeſted in all their movements, a ſentiment of inſurmountable averſion to the French. They even permitted it to operate to the prejudice and ruin of their own affairs; which, no longer ſupported by any confidence in their allies, became daily more perplexed and alarming. Encouraged by ſuch proofs of diſunion, the prince of Parma recommenced his military operations, and acquired the moſt deciſive advantages; while Biron, who commanded the troops of France, was impeded, or checked in every attempt. No cordial forgiveneſs took place; nor could any aſſurances of contrition and ſorrow, on the part of the duke of Anjou, effect a reunion with his offended ſubjects. That miſguided prince, dejected in mind, fallen from his elevation, abandoned in a great meaſure, by his brother, and become an object of deriſion to the Spaniards; after languiſhing near two months at Dunkirk, embarked for France. The city was immediately inveſted by the enemy, and ſurrendered in a few days. Biron, who might have compelled them to raiſe the ſiege, was not permitted to march to its reſcue, from the jealouſy and diſtruſt of the Flemings. The prince of Parma rapidly made himſelf maſter of Dixmude, and Nieuport; menaced Oſtend; beſieged Ipres; and already approached Antwerp itſelf. Ghent, the inhabitants of which city had been the moſt eager to invoke the aſſiſtance of the French; with the inconſtancy always characteriſtic of their conduct, were the firſt to betray a diſpoſition to return to the obedience of Spain. The people of Antwerp, irritated perſonally againſt the duke of Anjou, roſe tumultuouſly on the ſlighteſt pretences, and were ſcarcely to be

Return of the duke of Anjou into France. 28th June.

Rapid progreſs of the prince of Parma.

[21] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 45—54. Buſbeq. de Bong. letters 15 and 16.

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reſtrained from taking vengeance on thoſe of his countrymen, who remained in Flanders. To augment their diſcontent, the Spaniſh general quartered his troops in their immediate vicinity, which had long been exempt from military ravage and contribution. The popularity of the prince of Orange himſelf, could not be maintained againſt the tide of obloquy and ill fortune; nor was he exempt from the ſevereſt animadverſions, for his attachment to the French alliance. Warned by the ſymptoms of ſo ſerious a change in the opinions of the people, he determined to withdraw into Zealand; a reſolution which he ſpeedily executed. After his departure, he continued to exhort the Flemings to retain Biron, who ſtill commanded a conſiderable body of troops; and he diſpatched meſſengers to the principal cities, to enforce its expediency. But, all exertions were fruitleſs, to vanquiſh the reſentment for injuries ſo deep and recent: a decree was iſſued, enjoining the French to quit the Low Countries: and Biron, in compliance with it, embarking his forces, joined the duke of Anjou ſoon afterwards in the neighbourhood of Cambray, where he attempted to re-aſſemble an army. Such was the unfortunate termination of an enterprize, which had for its object the transfer of the Netherlands to a prince of France; and which, conducted by a ſkilful and able hand, might have materially affected and changed the face of Europe. The precipitation and treachery of the ſovereign whom the Flemings had elected, overturned the foundations of his future grandeur; and by a natural tranſition, operated powerfully in facilitating the final return of the Low Countries, to the obedience of Philip the Second [22].

Retreat of the prince of Orange into Zealand. July.

Auguſt.

Evacuation of the Low Countries, by the French.

While theſe ſiniſter events took place in Flanders, the ſeeds of civil diſſention, under the miſguided and puſillanimous management of the king, were attaining rapidly to maturity in France. The exertions which he had made in order to extricate his brother, and to re-

Fermentation in France.

[22] Strada, vol. iii. p. 435—452. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 260—262. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 55—61. Buſbeq. letters 17—24. paſſim. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 475—477.

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eſtabliſh the harmony that had ſubſiſted previous to the attempt upon Antwerp, had neither been produced by affection, nor eſteem. On the contrary, Henry, only anxious to prolong his indolent and diſſipated mode of life, regarded the projects of the duke of Anjou as ſubverſive of his own repoſe, to which he ſacrificed every conſideration of public honor, or utility. Inſtead of correcting, and amending the errors, which had rendered him juſtly an object of averſion, or of contempt, to his people; all the vices of his character acquired force, as he advanced in age. Taxes, multiplied and augmented, far from enriching the royal treaſury, left him needy, and incapable of oppoſing the deſigns of his enemies. The factions of his court and kingdom became annually more viſible, and appeared to haſten to a criſis. Terrified at the proſpect, and conſcious that he had no refuge in the attachment or veneration of his ſubjects; he tried to find an aſylum in the majeſty of the throne itſelf. He encreaſed his guards; no longer appeared in public, as he had been accuſtomed, without attendants; and attempted, if he could not conciliate affection, to inſpire fear, in all thoſe who approached his perſon. Wearied, or diſguſted, at the fetters impoſed on his freedom by theſe precautions; he ſoon deſiſted from them, and plunged anew into amuſements, or diſſipation. Yet, anxious to acquire, or to retain ſome place in the love of the lower orders of the nation, he affected an exterior of devotion, and even gave a ſanction, by his example, to the moſt abſurd practices of ſuperſtition.

Incapacity, and miſconduct of Henry.

His feeble precautions, and meaſures.

The confraternities of penitents, which, in the beginning of his reign, he had ſeen at Avignon; and which the remonſtrances of the magiſtrates of Paris, and of the moſt reſpectable members of the parliament, had hitherto prevented from finding an entrance into the metropolis; were introduced, and eſtabliſhed. Theſe pious mummeries, ſubverſive of real piety, injurious to moral obſervances, and deſtructive of all obedience to the laws, became the perpetual occupation and entertainment of the inhabitants of the capital. The members, compoſing them, were by the king's expreſs authority, formed

Inſtitution of the confraternities of penitents.

formed into a regular body; and ſtatutes, publiſhed with ſolemnity, were framed for their regulation. Henry, in perſon, accompanied by the Papal nuntio, the princes of the blood, and the courtiers, aſſiſted at the proceſſions. The chancellor of France, the keeper of the ſeals, and the firſt magiſtrates, did not heſitate to mix in the cavalcade, covered with ſacks, their faces concealed, and in the moſt inclement weather. Many diſorders and irregularities, equally contrary to religion and to decency, found ſhelter under ſo convenient a diſguiſe; and the people, inſtead of being edified, or amended, by ſuch ſpectacles, grew more licentious, and manifeſted their contempt of civil order. Far from attaining the object, for which he had ſet on foot the confraternities, Henry became only more univerſally deſpiſed. The contraſt of debauchery and exceſs, which he had exhibited in the company of his minions, only a few days preceding, and before the eyes of the ſame people, ſerved to expoſe him to the ſevereſt cenſure. Hypocriſy was added by his enemies, to the liſt of all his other vices; and thoſe who attributed to devout ſentiments or impreſſions, his attendance on the proceſſions of the Flagellants, did not leſs ſeverely reprobate ſuch conduct, as unbecoming his dignity and ſituation. Even the clergy, who might, from obvious motives, have been diſpoſed to ſee his actions through a favorable medium, yet declaimed againſt his character; and the pulpits of Paris already reſounded with the language of inſolence and ſedition [23].

1583. Proceſſions. March.

Contempt of the royal dignity and authority.

Numerous ſymptoms of an approaching and ſerious inſurrection began to appear; though ſuch was the indolence and infatuation of the king, that they made little impreſſion, and produced no change in his ſyſtem. Publications, derogatory to the title of his family, as derived from Hugh Capet; and calculated to impreſs the people with an opinion, of the greater validity of the pretenſions of the houſe of Lorrain to the crown of France, as being deſcended

Symptoms of popular commotion.

[23] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 66—69. L'Etoile, Jour. d'Henry III. p. 157 and 158. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 262 and 263.

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from Charlemagne; were induſtriouſly circulated. The injudicious, and miſtaken clemency of Henry, who did not puniſh the authors of ſuch inflammatory, or treaſonable productions, with the ſeverity that they merited, encreaſed the evil. He even abaſed himſelf ſo far, as to authorize a refutation of the attack, made on his right to the crown of France; and by ſo undignified a mode of proceeding, he neceſſarily inſpired his enemies with greater audacity [24].

Power and aſcendancy of the minions.

The effect of ſo many cauſes, combining to ſhake his power, was heightened by the unlimited aſcendancy obtained over him by his favorites. It ſeemed to partake of inſanity, and was neither moderated by conſiderations of propriety, nor even of practicability. He was principally anxious to divide his bounty between Joyeuſe and Epernon, with ſo equal a hand, that no degree of jealouſy, or rivality, might interrupt their felicity, and diminiſh their mutual friendſhip. Joyeuſe having conceived the deſign of acquiring the important and extenſive government of Languedoc, poſſeſſed by Montmorenci; but, unable to procure his renunciation or diſmiſſion; ventured on a ſingular expedient, in order to attain his object.

Journey of the duke of Joyeuſe to Rome.

He went, in perſon, to the court of Rome, and endeavoured to induce Gregory the Thirteenth, to iſſue an excommunication againſt the marſhal, as a protector and abettor of the Hugonots. His requeſt was rejected by the pontiff, who penetrated the motives of Joyeuſe's viſit, and knew how to appreciate the conduct of Montmorenci, in forming connections with the Proteſtants. To compenſate for the mortification attending the refuſal, Henry, on his return, gave him the government of Normandy, which, from its magnitude and conſequence, had uſually been divided into four ſeparate departments, and entruſted to lieutenants. Epernon received thoſe of Boulogne, and of Metz [25].

[24] L'Etoile, p. 162 and 163. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 70—72.
[25] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 264 and 265. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 74—80.

Every

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Every meaſure, adopted by the king, in order to recover his popularity, or to impreſs the nation with a favorable opinion of his character and intentions, only ſerved to evince his want of judgment, and was completely ineffectual. Under the plauſible pretence of hearing, and redreſſing the grievances of the people; but, in fact, with a view to derive ſupplies from their generoſity, he diſpatched commiſſioners into many of the provinces, ſelected from the nobility and clergy. They expoſed the wants of the crown; magnified, and extolled the affection of Henry for his ſubjects; but, concluded with demanding contributions: their miſſion was equally fruitleſs and injurious. An aſſembly, compoſed of delegates, which was deſigned to point out remedies to the various evils in the courts of juſtice, and the adminiſtration of the finances, was not attended with more beneficial conſequences. Propoſitions for aboliſhing venality in judicial employments, and for the diminution of taxes, were offered; but no alteration was effected [25].

1583. Ineffectual attempts to raiſe ſupplies.

Anthony, the titular and unfortunate king of Portugal, continued earneſtly to ſolicit another enterprize for the reduction of the Azores, and his ſubſequent re-eſtabliſhment in the throne from which he had been expelled. Henry, in compliance with the exhortations of his mother Catherine, and of the duke of Joyeuſe; rather than from any inclination to undertake ſo perilous an attempt, permitted a ſquadron to be equipped at Dieppe. It conſiſted of a few ſhips, on board of which were embarked ſix hundred troops. They reached the iſland of Tercera, where Emanuel de Sylva ſtill remained in the intereſts of the exiled king; and being joined by the ſurvivors of Strozzi's army, added to a number of Portugueze and natives, they prepared for their defence. Philip, anxious to cruſh a rebellion, from which his new conqueſt might receive a fatal blow, diſpatched the marquis of Santa Croix, at the head of ſixty galeaſſes, gallies, and

Second expedition to the Azores.

Fleet of Spain ſent to thoſe iſlands.

[25] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 268—270. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 81 and 82.

veſſels

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veſſels of various dimenſions. Near twelve thouſand Spaniſh, Italian, and German ſoldiers, accompanied him; furniſhed with every thing which could facilitate the entire accompliſhment of the expedition. The event correſponded to the preparations. Diſunion and jealouſy impeded the operations of the French and Portugueze. Sylva, having ſeparated from his allies, and even offered to betray them, in order to obtain his own pardon, no poſſibility remained of contending againſt ſo unequal a force. De Chatte, an officer of approved courage and fidelity, who commanded the troops of France, finding his ſituation

Auguſt. deſperate, capitulated on honorable terms; and Santa Croix, content with atchieving the great object of the war, did not violate the con-

Complete reduction of the rebels. ditions. Sylva, delivered up by his own adherents, ſuffered the puniſhment of rebellion; and Philip exerciſed the ſevereſt vengeance on the inhabitants of Tercera, who had ſo long defied his power, and endangered his tranquillity. No further attempt was made in any part of the Portugueze dominions, to ſhake off the yoke of Spain; and the unſucceſsful iſſue of the French armament, only tended to decry the adminiſtration, by which it had been fitted out and devoted to certain deſtruction [27].

1584. Proſperous condition of the Spaniſh affairs in Flanders. While Philip triumphed on the Atlantic, his arms were advancing rapidly in Flanders. The conſpiracy of the duke of Anjou againſt the liberties of Antwerp, may be regarded as an era, from which the affairs of the Netherlands conſtantly declined. Every endeavour to retard, or to avert its conſequences, was rendered ineffectual by the reſentment of the Flemings, and the promptitude of the prince of Parma. That celebrated commander improved his advantages, with vigor and ce-

12th April. lerity. Having inveſted Ipres, and compelled the place to capitu-

26th May. late, he ſoon afterwards became maſter of Bruges, which ſubmitted on favorable conditions. Ghent, ſhaken by inteſtine diviſions, already prepared to follow the example; and the navigation of the

[27] La Clede, vol. ii. p. 149—155. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 93—104.

Schelde,

Scheld, which was greatly impeded, rendered the preſervation of Antwerp more than doubtful [28].

1584.

Negotiations opened by the Flemings, with the duke of Anjou.

In theſe diſtreſsful circumſtances, the States, yielding to the wiſe counſels of the prince of Orange, diſpatched deputies to wait on the duke of Anjou, with aſſurances of their diſpoſition to ratify a new treaty, and to ſubmit to his orders. But, that prince was no longer in a ſituation to liſten to the dictates of ambition. From the period of his quitting the Low Countries, a ſenſe of his miſconduct, and remorſe for its effects, had conſtantly purſued him. Oppreſſed with ſhame, and uncertain of his future operations, he avoided ſociety, and abandoned himſelf to dejection. After paſſing ſome months in retirement, he ſuddenly and unexpectedly appeared again at court, with a few attendants. A reconciliation was mediated between him and his brother, by Catherine of Medecis; and the duke returning to the caſtle of Chateau Thierry on the Marne, was ſoon afterwards attacked by ſymptoms of a very alarming nature. A violent effuſion of blood from all the paſſages of his body, cauſed by the effects of a cough, reduced him to ſo languid a ſtate, that he expired in a few weeks. The nature and circumſtances of his diſtemper, though probably natural, gave riſe to ſuſpicions of poiſon, in an age when that crime was familiar. His death was the ſignal of civil war, and liberated the partizans of "the League" from all further diſguiſe, or neceſſity of obſerving meaſures with the crown.

11th February.

1ſt May.

His death.

10th June.

His character.

Notwithſtanding the defects and weakneſſes of his character, he was not deſtitute of generous qualities; and during his laſt illneſs, he manifeſted a deep concern for the fate of thoſe, who having contributed to enable him to undertake the enterprize of Flanders, were, by his deceaſe, reduced to poverty and diſtreſs. He even, by his laſt will, addreſſed to the king, earneſtly, though vainly, beſought of Henry to diſcharge his pecuniary obligations, which were immenſe.

[28] Strada, vol. iii. p. 465—476. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 173—181.

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Of all his acquiſitions in the Low Countries, only Cambray remained; and he bequeathed it to his brother, as a bulwark to Picardy and Champagne againſt the Spaniſh power. But, Henry, fearful of giving to Philip a pretext for war, if he openly took the city under his protection, permitted his mother to retain it, as if devolved to her by inheritance. From ſimilar motives, the council did not venture to qualify the deceaſed prince by the titles of duke of Brabant, and count of Flanders, at the ſolemnity of his funeral obſequies [29].

Aſſaſſination of the prince of Orange.

The duke of Anjou's death was ſpeedily followed by a blow, ſtill more alarming to the independance of the Flemings. The crime which Jaureguy had not been able to accompliſh, was perpetrated by another aſſaſſin; and Philip, at length, reaped the deteſtable fruits of his proſcription of the prince of Orange. That eminent and illuſtrious perſon, who had eſcaped the poniards of ſo many enemies, and the greater part of whoſe life had been paſſed in oppoſing the tyranny of Spain, fell by the hand of a deſperate fanatic. He was

10th July.

ſhot with three balls, diſcharged from a piſtol, as he roſe from table, in the city of Delft, his moſt frequent reſidence. Balthazar Gerard, a ſubject of the king of Spain, and an emiſſary of the prince of Parma, was the murderer; and in the midſt of the torments inflicted on him, he gloried in his crime. The prince ſurvived the wound only a few moments, and expired amid the tears and lamentations of his family, who were ſpectators of ſo tragical a ſcene.

Character of that prince.

The deſolation, occaſioned by his loſs, throughout the provinces of Holland and Zealand, was proportioned to the magnitude of the calamity. The people already anticipated their ſubjection to the Spaniſh yoke, and dreaded their own ſlavery, as inſeparably connected with the death of their protector. In prudence, fortitude, moderation,

[29] L'Etoile, Jour. p. 173 and 177—179. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 274 and 275. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 181—184. Buſbeq. letters 33, 34, 35. 37, 38, and 39. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 422 and 423.

firmneſs,

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firmneſs, and all the talents requiſite to form the head of a vaſt and powerful combination, he exceeded any of his contemporaries. His military capacity was far inferior to that of the prince of Parma; but, the univerſality of his genius, and the depth of his reſources, enabled him to ſuſtain, and to ſurmount, all the efforts of the Spaniſh monarchy. Invincible under adverſe fortune, he roſe more formidable from his defeats; and to his unremitted exertions, the republic of Holland was indebted for its freedom, and its exiſtence. The gratitude of the people whom he had ſaved from tyranny, was on the point of conferring on him the ſovereignty of their country, when his death took place; and as the beſt proof of their veneration for his ſervices, they elected his ſon, Maurice, although ſcarcely paſt the limits of childhood, governor of Holland, Zealand, Frieſland, and Utrecht; to which was added the dignity of high admiral. By an inſtance of felicity, rare in the hiſtory of mankind, he inherited almoſt all the great endowments of his father; excelled him in talents for war; and during the courſe of a life, diſtinguiſhed by brilliant atchievements, he confirmed and cemented the liberty, to which William, prince of Orange, had given birth [30].

Gratitude of the Dutch for his ſervices.

[30] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 184—189. Strada, vol. iii. p. 480—487. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 276.

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State of France, at the time of the duke of Anjou's death.—Ineffectual attempt of Henry, to induce the king of Navarre to renounce his religion.—Preparations of the duke of Guiſe, for taking up arms.—Support, given by Catherine of Medecis, to his ambitious projects.—Irreſolution of Henry.—Treaty of Joinville.—Sovereignty of the Low Countries, offered to the king of France.—Rejected by him.—Firſt enterprizes of "the League."—Timidity of the king.—Treaty of Nemours.—War, declared againſt the Proteſtants.—Manifeſto of the king of Navarre.—Junction of the Proteſtants with Montmorenci.—Acceſſion of Pope Sixtus the Fifth.—He excommunicates the king of Navarre.—Reply of that prince.—Commencement and progreſs of hoſtilities.—Unſucceſsful attempt of the prince of Condé, on Angers.—Affairs of the Low Countries.—Surrender of Antwerp.—Queen of England accepts the protection of the Dutch.

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1584. Condition of France, at this period.

BEFORE we enter upon that portion of the reign of Henry the Third, at which the wars of "the League" may be properly ſaid to commence, it is indiſpenſable to take a general view of the ſtate of the court, and of the kingdom of France. Many cauſes had hitherto conduced to retard, and to delay the operations of the confederacy, begun at Peronne in 1576; and the undoubted, though concealed object of which, was the deſtruction of the monarchy. Henry had, in ſome meaſure, diſarmed it, at an early period of its exiſtence, by adopting, and declaring himſelf its chief. The meaſure, however unbecoming the dignity of the throne, and the character of the common father and protector of every denomination of

his ſubjects; yet, had enabled him to guide and controul a machine, too powerful to be deſtroyed by open force. The Hugonots, feeble, diſunited, and excluded from dignities and employments, excited little apprehenſion: while, their leader, the king of Navarre, baniſhed to a diſtant province; deprived of authority, even in his own government of Guienne; and deſtitute of any proſpect of ſucceeding to the crown, was neither an object of alarm to his enemies, nor of attention to the nobility and people. Almoſt all the youth of France, and the moſt turbulent or diſcontented ſpirits, had found occupation beyond the limits of the kingdom, during the expeditions of the duke of Anjou to the Netherlands. Even, in the event of Henry's death without male iſſue, the Catholic religion could not be endangered, while his brother, whoſe adherence to the faith of his anceſtors was unimpeached, and who was only in the flower of his age, ſurvived, to aſcend the throne.

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But, all theſe circumſtances, ſo important to the preſervation of general tranquillity, were completely overturned by the deceaſe of the duke of Anjou. No barrier was any longer oppoſed to the eventual ſucceſſion of the king of Navarre, which the nation regarded as certain, from the ſuppoſed inaptitude of Henry for the purpoſes of marriage. That prince, without waiting till his brother's eyes were cloſed, and during the ſtate of extenuation which preceded his death, had already diſpatched the duke of Epernon into Gaſcony. He was authorized to offer the king of Navarre the moſt advantageous conditions, if he would renounce his adherence to the Proteſtant religion, and repair to court without delay. A public declaration of his right to ſucceed to the crown, in caſe of Henry's failure of iſſue male; accompanied with every mark of regard and diſtinction, were the inducements propoſed, to obtain his acquieſcence [1].

Conſequences of the duke of Anjou's death.

May. Embaſſy of Epernon.

[1] Buſbeq. letters 37, 38, 39, and 40. L'Etoile, p. 176. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 198 and 199.

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1584. Situation of the king of Navarre.

No ſituation could be more embarraſſing than that of the king of Navarre. Whether he accepted, or rejected the propoſals made him, he beheld difficulties of no common magnitude. To abandon at once his religion, and thoſe faithful followers who had never forſaken him under every reverſe of fortune: to return to a capital and a palace, ſtained with the blood of his friends, and in which he had, himſelf, been ſo long detained a priſoner: to commit his life, his honor, and his intereſts, to the mercy of a prince, whoſe weakneſs, flexibility, and facility, he well knew; were alarming reflexions. On the other hand, the crown of France appeared to ſolicit his acceptance, and to juſtify, if not to demand every ſacrifice, even of conſcience, for its attainment. His renunciation of the Hugonot faith and worſhip, could alone qualify him to wear it with ſafety; and would inſtantly remove the ſcruples of thoſe zealous Catholics, who might otherwiſe diſpute his title. Even the Guiſes and their partizans muſt be unable to oppoſe with effect his right of blood, when no longer weakened by the ſtain of hereſy; and the public felicity, paramount to every other conſideration, rendered his apoſtacy not only venial, but, in ſome meaſure, meritorious. If this important queſtion had been only decided on grounds of policy and expediency, it is probable that the latter alternative would have been predominant. But, in an age, when theological controverſy heated the minds of men, and when mutual injuries had rendered them tenacious of their opinions, arguments drawn from Scripture, were oppoſed to motives of ſtate neceſſity. The king of Navarre, after long heſitation, and mature deliberation, rejected the propoſition brought by Epernon: he qualified, at the ſame time, his refuſal, by proteſtations of his duty and allegiance to Henry; by aſſurances of his gratitude for the mark of royal favor extended to him; and by the offer of all the forces of his party, to ſuſtain the crown againſt their common enemies [a].

He rejects the offers of Henry.

July.

[a] Vie du Duc d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 85—91. Memoires de Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 77—175. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 198—200. Davila, p. 520—523.

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Although the reſult of Epernon's embaſſy was immediately rendered public by the Proteſtants themſelves, yet it afforded a pretext to the adherents of "the League," to accuſe Henry of intentions, the moſt hoſtile to the preſervation and maintenance of the antient religion. They aſſerted, that, far from exhorting the king of Navarre to abjure his errors, Epernon had, on the contrary, been only diſpatched, in order to conclude a treaty with him, for the extermination of all the adherents of the Catholic faith. Under this fictitious pretence, they proceeded to adopt meaſures, little removed from an avowed inſurrection. Troops were ſilently collected in different provinces: chiefs were named and appointed, who, on a ſignal given, were to repair to their deſtination; and every movement of the confederates evinced a rebellion as imminent and inevitable [3]. The feeble and puſillanimous conduct of the king, at a moment which demanded vigorous and deciſive counſels, gave courage to his enemies, while it expoſed the throne to inſult and contempt. Far from meeting a danger that he could no longer diſguiſe, or avoid, with firmneſs; he ſcarcely ventured to expreſs his ſenſe of its exiſtence, or reſentment at its approach. A proclamation, forbidding all confederations, or levies, on pain of treaſon, which he iſſued at this period, formed a very inſufficient barrier againſt a formidable faction, armed with the ſanction of religion, ſupported by foreign powers, and conducted under leaders of equal intrepidity and talents.

Conduct of the chiefs of the League.

Puſillanimity of the king.

December.

Henry, duke of Guiſe, the real chief of the League, and who excluſively directed all its motions, was ſupremely the object of popular idolatry. Concealing his perſonal ambition, under the maſk of zeal: retaining in his own boſom the ſecret of his ultimate views, and only divulging, even to his neareſt relations, a portion of his intentions: rapid in his determinations, as well as in their execution;

Qualities, and character of the duke of Guiſe.

[3] De Thou. vol. ix. p. 200 and 201. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 280.

and

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and conducted by the circumſtances which he had originated, to the completion of his plans; he ſeemed to be formed for the ſcene in which he acted ſo diſtinguiſhed a part. The ſuperiority of his genius, more than the priority of birth, had given him an unbounded aſcendant over his brothers, Louis, and Charles. The firſt of theſe, already raiſed to the dignity of a cardinal, of an aſpiring diſpoſition, impetuous, and violent, continually urged and propelled the duke to the moſt daring and deſperate counſels. On the contrary, Charles, duke of Mayenne, although diſtinguiſhed by equal courage, yet more cautious, moderate, and phlegmatic, diſapproved the raſh projects of the head of his family; manifeſted a degree of reluctance to hazard their preſent greatneſs; and rather yielded to, than actively participated in, the reſolution to commence a civil war [4].

Duke of Mayenne.

Plauſible as were the pretences on which the duke of Guiſe juſtified his oppoſition to the crown, they would not have been ſufficient to enable him to eſcape the imputation of rebellion, or to ſeduce the affections and allegiance of the people, without other aſſiſtance. It was indiſpenſable to cover and conceal his ultimate plans, under the ſhelter of a prince of the blood; and the cardinal of Bourbon was the only one fitted to his purpoſe. This weak and ſuperſtitious prelate, deluded by the proſpect of ſucceeding to the crown, in preference to his nephew, the king of Navarre; and ſurrounded by emiſſaries, who exaggerated the danger to which the Catholic religion would be expoſed, in the event of a Hugonot aſcending the throne; reſigned himſelf implicitly to their ſuggeſtions. Incapable of diſcerning the ſnare, and flattered by the homage paid to his rank, he prepared to act a principal part in the ruin and ſubverſion of France [5].

The cardinal of Bourbon joins the League.

Nor did the Guiſes receive leſs ſupport at this critical juncture, from the internal diſſenſions, treachery, and intereſted views, by

Factions, and weakneſs of the court.

[4] Davila, p. 502 and 503.

[5] Davila, p. 510—512. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 265 and 266.

which

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which the cabinet of Henry was ſwayed and actuated in all its deliberations. Catherine of Medecis, who had ſo long preſided in it, and whoſe influence or authority had been felt during near twenty years, was no longer in poſſeſſion of her former power. The minions of her ſon, who had engroſſed the royal favor, and alienated the king from his brother; ſucceeded in diminiſhing, if not annihilating, the queen-dowager's aſcendancy. She ſaw no probable means of reſuming it, except by rendering her interference neceſſary; and as her penetration enabled her clearly to perceive, that, in the ſituation of the Netherlands, Henry could only chuſe between a war with the king of Spain, or with his own ſubjects, ſhe deſired to involve him in the latter, where her mediation would be perpetually requiſite [6]. Other motives concurred to induce Catherine to favor the family of Lorrain. Of her four ſons, three were already dead in the prime of youth; and no rational hope of legitimate iſſue to inherit the crown remained, though Henry was ſtill in the vigor of his age. Her deteſtation of the king of Navarre was inveterate and implacable; nor did ſhe heſitate to declare, that ſhe regarded his right of blood as chimerical, or, at leaſt, as queſtionable and problematical [7]. His marriage with Margaret, her daughter, ſolemnized at the time of the maſſacre of Paris, had neither been fruitful, nor productive of any conciliation between the two branches of Valois and Bourbon. The irregularities and libertiniſm of the queen of Navarre, unreſtrained by decency, were ſo notorious, as even to excite the indignation of Henry the Third himſelf, though little attentive in his own conduct, to the rigid obſervance of the laws of decorum, or morality. That prince, incenſed againſt his ſiſter for having, as he believed, authorized the aſſaſſination of one of his meſſengers, charged with diſpatches of a very ſecret nature, to the duke of Joyeuſe, at Rome; had ordered her to leave the court, and to return to her huſ-

1584. The queen-dowager.

Views and projects of Catherine.

Libertiniſm of the queen of Navarre.

[6] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 252.

[7] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 277.

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band. Not content with baniſhing her from his capital and preſence, he had cauſed her to be treated with every poſſible indignity, and had publickly upbraided her with her infamy and debauchery. Neglected and deſpiſed by the king of Navarre, ſhe ſoon afterwards quitted him, and took refuge among the mountains of the province of Auvergne [8].

Plan of Catherine, for altering the ſucceſſion of the crown.

Under theſe circumſtances, the queen-mother, regardleſs of the Salic law, which excluded females from the throne, turned her views towards the deſcendants of her daughter Claudia, married to the duke of Lorrain. She even attempted to induce the king, whoſe averſion to the Hugonots rendered him ſuſceptible of every impreſſion to their diſadvantage; to take meaſures for devolving the crown on the eldeſt ſon of his ſiſter, the ducheſs of Lorrain. The duke of Guiſe, however diſinclined to become ſubſervient to the greatneſs of another, notwithſtanding the connexions of blood which ſubſiſted between them; yet, flattered the queen-dowager with his aid, and acquieſcence in her project. In return, Catherine diſſembled all his treaſonable practices; deceived the king by plauſible excuſes for his daring conduct; extenuated his faults, and betrayed her ſon in the deareſt intereſts of his throne and kingdom [9].

Irreſolution of the king.

That unfortunate monarch found no reſources in his own character, againſt the perfidy of his miniſters; who, deſirous of conciliating the favor of Catherine, or corrupted by Spaniſh gold, were equally diſpoſed to conceal, and even to advance the projects of "the League." His natural and habitual irreſolution was encreaſed by the oppoſite opinions of his two favorites. Joyeuſe, who, by his marriage, had contracted an alliance with the family of Guiſe, exhorted his maſter to temporiſe; and even to unite with the princes of that houſe, for the extermination of the Proteſtants. But, Epernon, by birth a Gaſcon, long attached to the king of Navarre, and one of

Oppoſite advice of his two favorites.

[8] Vie de Marguerite de Valois, p. 341—348.

[9] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 252 and 253.

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thoſe who accompanied him in his flight from the court, at the commencement of Henry's reign; urged him to have recourſe to the friendſhip and aſſiſtance of a prince, who, though a Hugonot, was his rightful heir, and only legitimate ſucceſſor in the throne of France. Uncertain of the courſe that he ſhould follow; incapable of a vigorous effort; and ever diſpoſed to conſult his preſent eaſe, at the expence of his future glory, or ſafety; Henry allowed the period for action to elapſe, in fruitleſs deliberations [10].

Treaty between the League, and the king of Spain.

While the king, by a timidity ſo pernicious, expoſed his crown to the moſt imminent hazard; the chiefs of "the League," conducted by very different counſels, and conſcious that they had already advanced too far to retreat with ſafety, ſigned their treaty with Philip the Second. It was ſolemnly ratified and exchanged at the caſtle of Joinville, belonging to the duke of Guiſe. He himſelf, in perſon, together with the duke of Mayenne, and a procurator who repreſented the cardinal of Bourbon, appeared in the names of the Catholics of France. Taxis, deputed by the king of Spain, and fully authorized to conclude the negotiation, ſtipulated on the part of his ſovereign. By the articles, Philip took under his protection, and entered into an alliance, offenſive, and defenſive, with the contracting princes, for the maintenance and preſervation of the Catholic religion in France, and in the Low Countries. In caſe of the demiſe of Henry the Third, the cardinal of Bourbon was declared to be the rightful heir to the crown; and a perpetual excluſion of all heretics, was ſpecified. The reſtitution of Cambray was inſerted; together with the co-operation of the French, to effect the reduction of the Flemiſh inſurgents. Philip, in return, engaged, from the day on which war ſhould be commenced againſt the Proteſtants, to pay to the Catholic princes fifty thouſand crowns, monthly; and by another article, he promiſed to ſupply the duke of Guiſe with whatever

31ſt December.

Articles of it.

[10] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 253.

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1585. Affairs of Flanders. While, in France, every circumſtance evinced the approach of civil war, the Flemings, divided among themſelves, and preſſed by the arms of the prince of Parma, were reduced to the greateſt extremities. The death of the duke of Anjou, at a juncture when an obliteration of all paſt injuries was on the point of taking place; followed by the aſſaſſination of the prince of Orange, plunged them into accumulated diſtreſs. Ghent had already ſubmitted on ſevere conditions, and was received into the obedience of its antient ſovereign. Mechlin, and Bruſſels, inveſted by detachments from the army of Spain, and beginning to experience the effects of famine, could not make a long or ſucceſsful reſiſtance. The prince of Parma reſerving to himſelf, as the moſt arduous and difficult atchievement, the ſiege of Antwerp; had commenced his operations, by completely intercepting all ſupplies, or reinforcements, which could arrive by means of the Scheld. In order to attain this object, without which all his efforts muſt be fruitleſs, he undertook to block the paſſage of the river below the city, notwithſtanding the breadth and the rapidity of the ſtream. The work, which in magnitude and difficulty, might be compared with the moſt ſublime efforts of antiquity, was conſiderably advanced; and if perfected, the reduction of Antwerp became almoſt certain and inevitable. Urged by ſuch alarming conſiderations, which admitted of no delay; the ſtates of all thoſe provinces where the Spaniſh power had not as yet penetrated, after mature reflexion, embraced the expedient of imploring the protection of the king of France. An embaſſy, compoſed of perſons, ſelected for their wiſdom and eminence, was empowered to

Siege of Antwerp.

Difficulty of the enterprize.

The Flemings implore the protection of Henry.

[11] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 282 and 283. Davila, p. 513 and 514. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 272—275.

offer

offer the ſovereignty of the Low Countries to Henry, on ſuch conditions as might be ſtipulated for their mutual advantage. They ſailed from the ports of Zealand; landed ſafely; and after remaining ſome time in the vicinity of Paris, were admitted, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances and menaces of Mendoza, the Spaniſh embaſſador, to an audience. Henry received them graciouſly, in preſence of the queen-mother, and of his council of ſtate; expreſſed his ſenſe of the flattering propoſition made him by the Flemings; gave them hopes of his acquieſcence in their requeſt; and ſignified his wiſh, that they would deliver a written copy of their offer, in order that he, in concert with his miniſters, might deliberate fully on the ſubject [12]. CHAP. V. 1585. January. 12th February.

Never did a more weighty and important diſcuſſion preſent itſelf to a king of France, nor one which involved in it conſequences more deeply affecting his perſonal glory, and the general intereſts of his crown. The inhabitants of the richeſt and moſt commercial countries of Europe, ſought to be received into the number of his ſubjects. Thoſe provinces were contiguous to his own dominions; and a conſiderable portion of them had antiently been poſſeſſed by his predeceſſors. The tyranny of Philip the Second had driven them into a ſtate of revolt; and greatly as their affairs had declined ſince the arrival of the prince of Parma, they were far from deſperate. That commander, occupied before Antwerp, and engaged in an undertaking which demanded time and exertions, muſt be driven to a neceſſity of raiſing the ſiege under multiplied diſadvantages, if a French army entered Flanders, or Brabant. The king of Spain had diſſolved all the tyes which connected him with Henry; and had violated the peace of Cateau, concluded in 1559, between the two crowns, in a manner the moſt inſulting. By his command, or with his approbation, the marquis of Santa Croix had ignominiouſly, and in equal contradiction to the laws of nations and of humanity, cauſed Reaſons for his acceptance of the offer. Provocations given him by Philip the Second.

[12] Strada, vol. iii. p. 491—495. Buſbeq. letters 40, and 41. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 252—255. Davila, p. 524 and 525. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 284.

the

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the unfortunate prifoners taken at the Azores, to be maſſacred. Not content with ſo barbarous a revenge, Philip had conſpired againſt Henry's domeſtic repoſe; inflamed his ſubjects to rebel; aided them with money; and concluded recently a ſolemn treaty with their chiefs, the avowed object of which was to involve the kingdom in an immediate civil war.

Debility of the crown, and monarchy of Spain.

Theſe powerful inducements to awaken a generous reſentment, were aided and ſuſtained by motives of policy, and almoſt of neceſſity. Only the choice between a civil, or a foreign war, was, indeed, left to the king; and it ſeemed impoſſible to balance on the preference of the two alternatives. Nor was the power of the Spaniſh monarchy ſuch, as to deter, or intimidate him from attacking it by open force. Philip, declining in years, and having only one ſickly heir, ſtill in infancy, to inherit his vaſt dominions, was, beſides, involved in numerous embarraſſments. Portugal was hardly ſubjected; and the Spaniſh treaſury, unequal to the perpetual demands made on it by the prince of Parma, could not ſuffice to equip new fleets, and to pay the numerous armies which would be neceſſary to combat the French. Even, if the reſources of the Catholic king were ſtill greater than his adherents deſcribed them, it was more judicious to meet him in the field, than to permit the emiſſaries of Spain to kindle ſedition, and to excite rebellion, by the ſecret diſtribution of arms and money[13]. There were not wanting about the perſon of Henry, ſome incorrupt and honeſt miniſters, who attempted to impreſs upon him a conviction of theſe facts, and to induce him to embrace a manly and a magnanimous part. That prince, who poſſeſſed penetration, and who had a perfect knowledge of the intereſts of his crown, inclined to accept the offers of the Flemings. But, his averſion to engage in an enterprize of ſuch magnitude; together with the oppoſition which it re-

Henry rejects the propoſition of the Flemings.

[13] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 298—312.

ceived

ceived from his mother, and the members of the cabinet, prevailed on him to reject the propoſition. At the audience which he gave to the embaſſadors of the States, he endeavoured to temper the refuſal by every conciliating expreſſion; lamented, that the ſituation of his own affairs, and the troubles occaſioned by the adherents of "the League," did not permit him to undertake their defence; aſſured them, that when he had pacified the commotions of France, he would extend his attention to the concerns of the Netherlands; and promiſed to recommend their cauſe to the protection of the queen of England [14].

1585. 30th March.

The League takes up arms.

The duke of Guiſe had not waited for the ultimate deciſion of Henry upon the propoſals of the Flemings, to take up arms. No ſooner had the intelligence reached the prince of Parma, that the embaſſadors, deputed by the States, had been admitted to an audience of the king of France, than he diſpatched repeated couriers to Mendoza, the Spaniſh embaſſador at Paris. Convinced, that on the final event of the ſiege of Antwerp, depended the reduction of all the Netherlands to the obedience of Philip; he beſought of that miniſter, to urge the partizans of "the League" to the immediate accompliſhment of their late engagements with the crown of Spain. Guiſe himſelf, ſenſible that if a foreign war took place, he ſhould not be able to retain under his ſtandard the nobility and officers who were attached to him; did not heſitate to ſtrike the blow. A ſecond edict, publiſhed by Henry, in which he prohibited all aſſemblies of troops without his expreſs command; and by which he diminiſhed conſiderably the ordinary taxes; made no alteration, nor occaſioned any delay, in his reſolution. Already, at the firſt ſignal given, the forces retained by him, began to collect in Lorrain; while the duke of Mayenne put himſelf at the head of a formidable body, in Champagne and Burgundy. Baſſompierre, who had raiſed a

Edict publiſhed by Henry. 29th March.

[14] Buſbeq. letters 44, 45, and 46. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 312—315.

number

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number of German cavalry; and Fifer, who had received a ſimilar commiſſion to levy infantry in the cantons of Switzerland, were ordered to advance with all poſſible celerity. The firſt attack was made on the city of Verdun, which, after a ſhort defence, ſurrendered to the duke of Guiſe in perſon. Toul followed the example; but, Metz, of which Epernon was governor, and in which he had placed a numerous garriſon, remained firm in its adherence to the crown, and rejected all the offers of the rebels [15].

21ſt April. Firſt exploits of the League.

Previous to the commencement of hoſtilities, the cardinal of Bourbon, acting in concert with the other chiefs of "the League," retired from court to his dioceſe of Rouen; from whence being invited by a deputation of the nobility of Picardy, he repaired to Peronne, in that province. On his arrival, he publiſhed a manifeſto, calculated to impreſs the nation with ſentiments equally favorable to the cauſe which he had embraced, and injurious to the character of the king. Every popular topic of declamation and complaint was enumerated, and placed in its moſt conſpicuous point of view. The indirect encouragement and ſupport of hereſy: the danger of the entire abolition of the antient faith and worſhip: the venality of offices: the abuſes committed by favorites; and the intolerable pecuniary oppreſſions exerciſed on the people. To redreſs theſe grievances, it was ſtated, that he, as firſt prince of the blood, together with a number of other perſons, of every order and condition, had taken up arms; which they were determined never to lay down, till they had obtained complete ſatisfaction and redreſs [16]. Meanwhile, in every part of the kingdom, but, peculiarly, in the northern and eaſtern provinces, where the adherents of the houſe of Guiſe were numerous, they proceeded to throw off all ſubjection to the government. Lyons was ſecured to them by Mandelot, who having ſeized and demoliſhed the citadel, declared in their favour. Bourges, Orleans, and Angers,

Manifeſto of the cardinal of Bourbon.

31ſt March.

Inſurrections in the provinces.

[15] Davila, p. 535 and 536. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 275—283.

[16] Davila, p. 528—535. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 284—287. Memoires du Duc de Nevers, folio, Paris 1665, vol. i. p. 641—646.

three

three of the moſt important, and well fortified cities of France, were induced to revolt by their reſpective governors, who joined "the "League." Mezieres, a frontier garriſon of Champagne, was captured by the duke of Guiſe; while the duke of Mayenne rendered himſelf maſter of Dijon. Chalons, a place ſituate on the river Marne, and at no conſiderable diſtance from Paris, was fixed on for the magazine of arms; and the cardinal of Bourbon, whoſe preſence and name were ſo uſeful in concealing, or in juſtifying their enterprize, was conducted thither from Peronne, with demonſtrations of extraordinary attention and reſpect [17]. CHAP. V. 1585.

Reſources of the crown.

Notwithſtanding ſo many proofs of diſaffection and even of revolt, a prince of magnanimity might have found in the throne itſelf, and in the attachment of a conſiderable part of the nation, reſources more than adequate to ſuppreſs the rebellion, commenced by the adherents of "the League." The ſpecious pretences, under which the leaders attempted to palliate their inſurrection, could only delude the multitude; and made no impreſſion on the wiſe, or the moderate portion of their countrymen. In ſeveral places, their attempts had been completely fruſtrated, and their partizans or accomplices puniſhed as traitors. Marſeilles, after having been near three days in the hands of the inſurgents, was recovered by the royaliſts, and ſecured in the obedience of the crown. At Bourdeaux, marſhal Matignon rendered ineffectual every effort to ſhake the fidelity, or to gain the poſſeſſion of that important and commercial city. The proclamation of the king, declaring it treaſonable to take up arms; weak as ſuch a meaſure muſt be eſteemed, had yet induced many perſons, who had been incautiouſly induced to join the party, inſtantly to return home. Others were ſtill wavering and uncertain: the duke of Nevers, one of their greateſt ſupports, abandoned them from diſguſt, or from ſcruples of honor and conſcience. Even the cardinal

Failure of the plans of the League.

[17] Davila, p. 538. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 285. Buſbeq. letters 48, 49, and 50.

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Obſtacles to its ſucceſs.

of Bourbon himſelf, during a ſhort abſence of Guiſe, had been powerfully ſhaken, and almoſt induced to return to a ſenſe of his duty. It demanded all the eloquence and ſophiſtry of the duke, to obliterate the impreſſion. Gregory the Thirteenth, notwithſtanding the importunity and ſolicitation of the Spaniſh cardinals, had pertinaciouſly refuſed to give any ſanction to an enterprize, which, however decorated with the epithets of a holy union for preſerving the Catholic religion, ſavoured of open rebellion. The ſubſidies of Spain were ſubject to many delays and contingencies: the Swiſs and German troops had not yet arrived; and in ſeveral provinces, the forces of "the League" had been diſperſed, or cut in pieces [18].

Weakneſs of Henry's conduct.

But, ſuch was the inaptitude of Henry for any meaſures of energy; ſo inſurmountable was his indolence, puſillanimity, and relaxation of mind, that all theſe circumſtances did not rouſe him to reſiſtance. Neither indignation for the inſulted majeſty of the throne; nor a wiſe conſideration of the calamities, which firmneſs and fortitude could alone avert, were of ſufficient force to burſt the habitual tameneſs of his character. It was in vain that the king of Navarre, by his agents, beſought of him not to allow the menaces of the duke of Guiſe, to induce him to violate the peace ſubſiſting with the Hugonots, and thereby plunge himſelf anew into civil war. Yielding to the ſuggeſtions of his mother, and to the intereſted, or perfidious advice of the ſame miniſters, who had recently procured the rejection of the offers of the Flemings; he authorized Catherine of Medecis to open a negotiation with the heads of the confederates. It was begun at Epernay, near Chalons; and after ſome delays, was ultimately concluded at Nemours. The terms on which the duke of Guiſe agreed to lay down his arms, were not leſs deſtructive, than they were ignominious, to the ſovereign, by whom they were accepted.

He negotiates with the League.

7th July.

[18] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 285—290. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 288—298, and 316—320.

Henry

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Henry not only conſented to commence hoſtilities on the Proteſtants, and to revoke every conceſſion hitherto made for their protection; but, he ſubmitted to the perſonal degradation of pardoning thoſe by whom he had been inſulted and injured, on account of the pretended zeal exhibited by them in defence of the Catholic religion. He even engaged to employ the troops of "the League," actually drawn out againſt his authority, for the extirpation of hereſy; and to charge the chiefs, with the execution of the ſentence pronounced againſt the princes of the blood, the preſumptive heirs to the crown of France. In addition to theſe public articles, he was compelled to ſubſcribe to private conditions, which cemented the power of the Guiſes, and levelled all the remaining barriers oppoſed to their encroachments. Twelve cities, ſituated in different provinces of the kingdom, were granted them as places of ſurety: a company of guards, on horſe-back, was allowed to the cardinal of Bourbon; to the dukes of Guiſe and Mayenne; to their brother, the cardinal, and to their uncles, the dukes of Aumale and Elbeuf. All the money belonging to the royal revenue, which they had intercepted and applied to their own purpoſes, was remitted; and the ſum of two hundred thouſand crowns, due to the German forces, raiſed by the duke of Guiſe, was agreed to be defrayed by the king [19].

1585. Ignominious articles of the treaty.

Secret conditions.

While Henry thus purchaſed a precarious and diſgraceful ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, at the expence of every prerogative of the crown, and by the ſacrifice of his own dignity and independance; the king of Navarre diſplayed a very different character. Conſcious that he muſt become the firſt victim to "the League," and that his perſonal ruin would open the way to the deſtruction of the monarchy itſelf; he did not heſitate to anticipate, and to expoſe, the treaſonable projects of his enemies. In a long, and ſpirited manifeſto, addreſſed to the nation, he exculpated himſelf from every injurious charge or imputation,

Magnanimous behaviour of the king of Navarre.

10th June. His manifeſto.

[19] Davila, p. 557 and 558. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 292. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 328—331. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 686—689.

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which the malice of his opponents had invented: profeſſed his readineſs to ſubmit even his religious opinions, to the deciſion of a council legitimately aſſembled: retorted the charge of rebellion and treaſon on thoſe who had, without provocation, taken up arms againſt their prince: reprobated their ambition, rapacity, and contempt of the laws; and concluded by beſeeching the king, that he would permit him to terminate a conteſt, in which ſo much blood muſt be ſhed, by a ſingle combat between himſelf and the duke of Guiſe, in whatever place, either within, or beyond the limits of the kingdom, he might think proper to appoint [20].

His letter to Henry.

Finding, however, that all his efforts to prevent an accommodation between Henry and the adherents of "the League," were fruitleſs; and that the Proteſtants were on the point of being attacked at the

10th July.

ſame time, by their united forces; he addreſſed a letter to the king, in which was depictured all the heroiſm and magnanimity of an undaunted mind, ſtruggling againſt oppreſſion. He reminded Henry of his own orders recently iſſued, enjoining him, as head of the Proteſtants, to remain quiet; aſſuring him of protection; and proteſting, that no menaces or artifices of their common adverſaries, ſhould ever induce him to infringe the toleration extended to the Hugonots, by the laſt treaty of peace. He remonſtrated with Henry on the cruelty and impolicy of driving his unoffending ſubjects, to the neceſſity of defending themſelves: he appealed to his own innocence, as the beſt juſtification; and profeſſed his reliance on a juſt and ſuperintending Providence, the avenger of crimes, and the ſhield of thoſe who are oppreſſed. In concluſion, he declared his determination to periſh with arms in his hands; and to oppoſe to his laſt breath, the unjuſt enterprizes of his own enemies, and of the crown and kingdom of France [21].

[20] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 320—325. Davila, p. 358—362.
[21] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 326—328.

Theſe

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1585. Union of Montmorenci, with the king of Navarre.

These spirited and generous sentiments were followed by measures equally decisive and efficacious. Although the ostensible preparations and menaces of "the League," armed with the sanction of the royal authority, appeared to be exclusively and solely levelled against the professors of heresy; yet, the duke of Montmorenci, well aware that his own ruin was inseparably connected with that of the king of Navarre, did not hesitate to enter into the strictest union with him and the prince of Condé, for their mutual preservation. Having met near Lavaur, in the province of Languedoc, they framed, and rendered public a declaration, calculated to undeceive the nation on the motives of the war, ready to be commenced. They charged the family of Guise, with having been the authors of all the misfortunes, which, from the reign of Francis the Second, to the present time, had desolated and depopulated the finest country in Europe: that, after calumniating the princes of the blood, and endeavouring to render them odious to the people; they had not scrupled to take up arms against the king himself, and by the impressions of terror, to compel an equitable monarch, to wage war with his subjects. They protested, in their private and public capacities, against such acts of violence and treason; declared their readiness to take under their safeguard, all Catholics who had not signed "the League;" and finished by repeating their determination, with the means which God and Nature had put into their hands, to oppose such unprovoked, and unjustifiable violence [22].

10th August. Their joint declaration.

Tenor of it.

During the progress of these interesting events, Henry, irresolute, unable to recede, and irritated against the faction which was about to render him the reluctant instrument of their ambitious views; beheld before him the immediate prospect of a civil war. His discontent manifested itself, notwithstanding the presence of the cardinal of Guise, in the language and indirect reproaches, with which he loaded

Conduct, and discontent of the king.

[22] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 332—334.

the

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the Pariſians; who, after engaging him in a rupture with the Proteſtants, from their antipathy to hereſy, expreſſed no inclination to ſubmit to the pecuniary burthens, neceſſary for carrying on hoſtilities. Deſirous to try all expedients, in order to avert ſo great a calamity, of which he was the involuntary cauſe, and of which he foreſaw that he muſt ultimately become the victim; he reſolved to attempt anew, to ſhake the conſtancy of the king of Navarre, and with that hope, he again diſpatched an embaſſy, to the court of Nerac. Every offer was held out, which could prevail upon him, if not to renounce his religion, and embrace the Catholic faith; yet, to ſuſpend for a limited time, the exerciſe of the Hugonot worſhip in Bearn; and to ſurrender the places of ſecurity, put into the hands of the Proteſtants, at the laſt treaty of peace. In caſe of the refuſal of the king of Navarre to conſent to ſo great conceſſions, the embaſſadors were ordered to inſiſt, that he ſhould iſſue directions to ſtop the march of the German auxiliaries, who were ready to enter the kingdom. But, that prince did not think proper to comply with any of the requiſitions; and he beſought the king not to expect, that whatever deſire he might have to evince his allegiance, he could carry his obedience ſo far, as tamely to preſent his neck to his implacable enemies. He adjured his majeſty, not to abandon his own honor, by uniting with traitors; and he expreſſed his readineſs to meet the queen-mother, for the purpoſe of adjuſting the terms of a final accommodation, provided that Henry would previouſly withdraw his forces from all the provinces ſouth of the Loire [23].

25th Auguſt. Embaſſy to the king of Navarre.

Propoſitions rejected.

Death of Gregory the Thirteenth.

No alternative except war remained; and "the League," already poſſeſſed of all the authority of the crown, had received a further acceſſion of ſtrength, by the demiſe of Gregory the Thirteenth. That aged pontiff, who could never be induced to give his unqualified approbation to their ſchemes, expired after a reign

[23] Davila, p. 573 and 574. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 337—340. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 293.

of

of thirteen years; and was ſucceeded by Felix Perretti, better known in hiſtory under the title of Sixtus the Fifth. He commenced his ſhort, but, memorable pontificate, by the ſevereſt puniſhment of the outrages and crimes, common in every part of the territories of the church; and from which the city of Rome itſelf was not ſecure, or exempt. The timid and moderate character of his predeceſſor had encouraged them, by the impunity with which they were attended; but, the inexorable ſeverity of Sixtus, ſpeedily reſtored order and ſubmiſſion to the laws. The arrogance and violence of his diſpoſition, led him eaſily to comply with the entreaties, made to him by the emiſſaries of the houſe of Guiſe; and at their inſtigation, he ſoon after his acceſſion to the chair of St. Peter, iſſued a bull, by which he declared the king of Navarre, and the prince of Condé excommunicated, and incapable of ſucceeding to the crown of France. This political malediction was accompanied with epithets the moſt opprobrious, applied to the two princes themſelves, who were ſtigmatized as apoſtates, heretics, and enemies of God and man. Their vaſſals, or ſubjects, were releaſed from all obedience; and Henry was exhorted, in his capacity of the moſt chriſtian king, to extirpate the race of Bourbon, and to carry the Papal ſentence into immediate execution [24].

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1585. 10th April. Election of Sixtus the Fifth.

21ſt September. Bull, publiſhed by him, againſt the king of Navarre.

So indecent and inſulting a diſplay of the plenitude of the apoſtolic power, excited various and oppoſite emotions, on its promulgation in France. The partizans of "the League," elated at the favorable interference of the ſovereign pontiff, expreſſed their ſatisfaction and triumph, by every poſſible means. Paris was inflamed, and the paſſions of the populace were irritated by ſeditious preachers; who aſcending the pulpits, harangued the multitude, and pointed their deteſtation not only againſt the Proteſtants, but, againſt Epernon, and other perſons ſuſpected of attachment to the princes of the

Effects produced by it.

[24] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 368—371.

blood.

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1585.

Conduct of Henry.

blood. On the other hand, Henry, however ſervile and tame in his acquieſcence with the requiſitions of the duke of Guiſe, could not avoid feeling and reſenting an outrage, which, though apparently pointed againſt hereſy, did not leſs attack the majeſty of the throne, and the independance of his crown. He well knew, that, under the minority of Charles the Ninth, twenty-three years preceding, when Pius the Fourth, who then occupied the Papal chair, had ventured to excommunicate Jane d'Albert, queen of Navarre; the miniſters of his brother had not ſubmitted in ſilence to the indignity. The conſtable Montmorenci, and the chancellor l'Hopital, who then preſided in the cabinet of France, had compelled the ſee of Rome to revoke, and even to ſuppreſs the bull, as injurious to a princeſs ſo nearly allied to the royal blood. But, Henry, already engaged in a war for the purpoſe of exterminating the Hugonots, and apprehenſive of giving any cauſe of offence to the adherents of "the League," contented himſelf with a more indirect mode of diſapprobation, by only prohibiting its publication [25].

He indirectly oppoſes it.

Generous anſwer of the king of Navarre to the bull.

The king of Navarre, reſtrained by no conſiderations of that nature, and following only the impulſe of his indignation, took more efficacious meaſures for reſenting the inſult. Unawed by any terror of the pontifical power, he cauſed a reply to the bull of excommunication to be publiſhed, and affixed in the moſt public places of Rome itſelf. Neither the perſon, nor the dignity of Sixtus, were reſpected in the compoſition. With the generous warmth of a high-ſpirited and injured prince, he gave to the ſucceſſor of St. Peter the epithets of a calumniator, and a lyar; appealed from his ſentence to that of a general council; and declared mortal and irreconcilable war againſt him, as the enemy of God, and as Antichriſt. He reminded Sixtus, that his own anceſtors of the family of Bourbon, had formerly repreſſed the arrogance and audacity of the

5th November.

[25] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 374—376.

biſhops

biſhops of Rome; and added, that, as he was no way inferior to his moſt illuſtrious predeceſſors, he truſted, by the divine aid, to exact a ſignal and exemplary vengeance for the late outrage. He concluded by appealing to all the allies of France, and to all the crowned heads or princes of Europe, againſt the tyranny of the ſee of Rome, and againſt the enterprizes of "the League," as the common foes of God, the king, and the ſtate [26]. CHAP. V. 1585.

An anſwer ſo magnanimous, made by a prince under circumſtances the moſt adverſe, excited univerſal admiration. All the moderate, and diſpaſſionate part of the nation, reſpected the courage and elevation of mind which could dictate it; and the Catholics themſelves, far from approving the excommunication, ſaw with regret and concern, that its effects would be more beneficial, than injurious, to the party againſt whom it was directed. Even Sixtus himſelf, who knew how to appreciate the great qualities of an enemy, conceived from this ſpecimen, the higheſt opinion of the king of Navarre. He did not conceal his ſentiments; expreſſed his eſteem for a conſtancy and firmneſs, which no external accidents could depreſs; and uniformly refuſed to open the treaſury of the church, or to contribute, in any manner, towards the war declared againſt the Hugonots. Approbation, which it excited.

The hoſtilities, which "the League," under the name and ſhelter of the crown, had been ſo long preparing, at length commenced. They were preceded by a new edict on the part of the paſſive and reluctant king, whom the Guiſes had compelled, againſt his inclination, to attack the king of Navarre. It reduced to the term of fifteen days, the remainder of the ſix months allowed to the adherents of the reformed religion, for quitting the kingdom; and enjoined the confiſcation and public ſale of all their effects, at the end of that period. The duke of Guiſe having ſignified to Henry his New edict of Henry. 16th October.

[26] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 376—378. Davila, p. 574—576.

 deſire

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desire of commanding the forces, which were to be stationed on the eastern frontier, in order to oppose the entrance of the Germans into the kingdom; his brother, the duke of Mayenne, was appointed to conduct the army, destined to march against the king of Navarre, in Guienne. But, Henry, though he did not venture by open force to repress the enterprizes of that powerful family, took effectual precautions to impede their military operations. Matignon, a man devoted to the crown, was ordered to co-operate with Mayenne; but, in reality, his instructions were of an opposite nature; and the delays or obstacles which he continually framed, added to the advanced season of the year, prevented any enterprize of moment, on the part of the Catholics [27].

1585. Conduct of that monarch.

Meanwhile, the Hugonots, neither depressed by the late edict, nor dismayed by the vast disparity of force, prepared with vigor for their defence. The king of Navarre, after publishing a counter edict, justifying his resistance on the principle of necessity, and commanding the seizure of the effects of the inhabitants, in all the cities which had enforced the royal orders; assembled his troops, on the banks of the Garonne. In Dauphiné, Lesdiguieres obtained many advantages over the Catholics, and reduced to his obedience the greater part of the province. Another of their chiefs, the viscount of Turenne, penetrated into the Limousin; while the prince of Condé drove the duke of Mercœur out of Poitou, with considerable loss. Emboldened by his success, the prince, pushing his advantages, laid siege to Brouage; and he was on the point of compelling the garrison to capitulate, when he received the intelligence, that the castle of Angers had been surprized by a small number of his adherents. Elated at so unexpected and prosperous an event, which opened a prospect of transferring the theatre of war from Poitou, to the rich provinces beyond the Loire, and even of approaching Paris; he in-

Preparations of the Hugonots, for their defence.

30th November.

Operations of the war.

Enterprize of Angers.

[27] Davila, p. 572 and 573. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 379.

stantly

ſtantly determined to quit the proſecution of his preſent enterprize, and to advance, without delay, to the aſſiſtance of his friends. Many of his officers remonſtrated with him on the danger, if not the temerity of ſuch an attempt: they repreſented the ſeaſon, already far advanced; the difficulty of paſſing ſo broad a river as the Loire, ſwelled by autumnal rains; and the uncertainty of the caſtle holding out till his arrival. But, the prince, whoſe intrepidity qualified him for the moſt arduous exploits, and whom obſtacles only irritated, remained firm to his purpoſe. He immediately began his march, at the head of a choſen body of his friends and ſoldiers; effected his paſſage acroſs the Loire; and after ſurmounting many impediments, appeared before Angers.

CHAP. V. 1585. 8th October. The prince of Condé paſſes the Loire.

By a ſurprizing, and almoſt unparalleled ſeries of accidents, in which fortune had a greater ſhare than wiſdom, or courage; the three officers who gained poſſeſſion of the caſtle, had already periſhed. The ſoldiers, only ſixteen in number, who remained; deſtitute of any chief, and of oppoſite religious perſuaſions, agreed to ſurrender; and on the day preceding the arrival of Condé, they had put the caſtle into the hands of the duke of Joyeuſe. Notwithſtanding ſo ſevere a diſappointment, which the prince did not receive, till he was in ſight of Angers, he perſiſted to attack the city. But, his troops, diſcouraged, and oppoſed by ſuperior numbers, gave way; and it became expedient to retreat. The attempt was arduous, and almoſt impracticable; as the Catholics, apprized of the expedition, had aſſembled to intercept his flight, or his paſſage over the Loire. Beſet by enemies, he reluctantly conſented to adopt the only means of extrication left; that of dividing his troops into ſmall parties, who might evade the vigilance of their numerous opponents. The expedient was embraced, and attended with uncommon ſucceſs; almoſt all the ſoldiers having rejoined their ſtandards, without loſs. The prince of Condé himſelf, whoſe capture was regarded as ſo certain, that

21ſt October. He attacks Angers. His retreat and flight.

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the Pariſians already anticipated the ſpectacle of a prince of the blood brought priſoner to the capital; followed only by a few friends, took the route of Normandy; and paſſing over into the iſland of Guernſey, purſued his voyage from thence to the court of England [28].

1585. He eſcapes to England.

Reduction of Flanders and Brabant.

While France was thus involved in all the calamities inſeparable from civil war, the prince of Parma had nearly atchieved the total reduction of Flanders and Brabant to the obedience of Spain. That great commander, profiting of the diſſentions of the Flemings, and of the death of the prince of Orange, puſhed his operations with augmented vigor. Bruſſels, reduced to the laſt extremities of famine, capitulated, and obtained honorable conditions. The Catholics, who formed the moſt numerous part of the inhabitants of Nimeguen, having expelled, or overpowered the Proteſtants, opened their gates to the Spaniards. By this important acquiſition, Guelderland, and even the provinces of Holland and Utrecht, were, in ſome degree, laid open to the incurſions of the enemy. Mechlin, inveſted on all ſides, and hopeleſs of relief, ſurrendered at diſcretion. Antwerp alone continued, after near a year, to reſiſt the utmoſt efforts of the beſiegers. Aſſiſted by engineers of the moſt conſummate ſkill, and ſuſtained by their deteſtation of the tyranny of Philip; they not only rejected every offer of accommodation; but, repeatedly attacked the works, by which the prince of Parma had intercepted the ſupplies of proviſions. Exhauſted at length by fruitleſs endeavours to deſtroy the bridge conſtructed acroſs the Scheld: repulſed in their ſallies; and beginning to experience the preſſure of famine; they opened a negotiation with the Spaniſh general. It was ſoon terminated; and that celebrated city, which had long been the emporium of the north; but, which had experienced during the laſt twenty

Bruſſels ſurrenders, 13th March.

April.

and Mechlin. 21ſt June.

[28] D'Aubig. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 440—452. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 385—398. Davila, p. 582—587. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 294—296.

years,

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years, every variety of deſolation, pillage, and misfortune, ſubmitted reluctantly to its former maſter. Philip, whoſe bigotry and violence had baniſhed order, tranquillity, and commerce from the Netherlands; after exhauſting the immenſe reſources of the monarchy of Spain in the attempt to reduce the Flemings, beheld himſelf again in poſſeſſion of the ten ſouthern provinces. But, the trade of Antwerp had fled with its civil and religious liberties; while Amſterdam, hitherto concealed by its own obſcurity, began to emerge; and all the ſources of wealth were irrecoverably transferred from the Scheld to the Texel [29].

1585. Surrender of Antwerp. 17th Auguſt.

In this extremity, the Dutch, already united by the cloſeſt political tyes, and maſters of the ſeven northern provinces of the Low Countries; far from yielding to deſpair, evinced an unſhaken fortitude. Deprived of the aſſiſtance and co-operation of the Flemings; rejected in their application to the king of France; and on the point of being attacked by the victorious troops of Spain, conducted by the greateſt general of the age; they determined to implore the aid of Elizabeth, queen of England. While Antwerp, reduced to extremity, though not ſurrendered, continued to reſiſt, an embaſſy, compoſed of the moſt illuſtrious perſons from all the provinces yet unſubdued, arrived in London, and offered the ſovereignty to her, on terms ſimilar to thoſe which had been propoſed to Henry the Third. Following the dictates of the cautious and ſagacious policy, which, during her long reign, had always tempered and reſtrained the natural magnanimity of her character; ſhe declined the propoſition in its full extent; but, aſſured the States of her immediate, and efficacious protection. By a treaty concluded with them, ſhe ſtipulated to ſend over five thouſand infantry, and one thouſand cavalry into Holland, under an experienced commander, to whom extenſive civil and military authority ſhould be confided. Theſe

Dutch implore the aid of the queen of England.

6th July.

10th Auguſt. Treaty between Elizabeth and the Dutch.

[29] Strada, vol. iv. p. 1—149. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 417—442.

troops,

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troops, which the queen engaged to maintain at her own expence during the continuance of the war, were to be defrayed, after its concluſion, by the Dutch; and as pledges for their repayment of the money neceſſary to be diſburſed, the towns of the Brille, and Fluſhing, together with the caſtle of Rammekins, were conſigned to Elizabeth. Unterrified by the menaces and alarming preparations of Philip to invade her in her own dominions; ſhe ſpeedily accompliſhed the conditions. The Engliſh ſuccours landed in Zealand; and though her partiality for an unworthy favorite, induced her to commit ſo important an expedition, and ſo vaſt a charge, to the earl of Leiceſter, who abuſed his power, and tarniſhed the luſtre of his ſovereign's arms; yet, the timely aſſiſtance extended to the Dutch, rendered ineffectual all the exertions of Spain, and finally eſtabliſhed the exiſtence and independance of the ſeven united provinces [30].

December. Engliſh troops ſent to Zealand.

[30] Hume, Hiſt. of Eng. vol. v. p. 269—273. Strada, vol. iv. p. 176—185. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 447—452.

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Letters addreſſed by the king of Navarre, to the different orders of the kingdom.—Campaign in Guienne, and Poitou.—Conduct of Henry.—His journey to Lyons.—Audience, and anſwer, given by him, to the German embaſſy.—Operations of the duke of Guiſe.—Conference of St. Brix.—State of Paris.—Machinations of "the League."—Henry diſconcerts them.—Succeſs of Joyeuſe.—Entrance of the Germans and Switzers into Lorrain.—Inactivity of the king.—Duke of Guiſe defends France.—Battle of Coutras.—Progreſs of the foreign army.—Defeat of Vimory.—Second defeat, at Auneau.—Flight of the Germans and Switzers.—Treaty concluded with them, by Henry.—Exploits, and perſonal glory of the duke of Guiſe.—Return of the king to Paris.—Foreign affairs.

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1586.

King of Navarre addreſſes letters to the different orders, 1ſt January;

DURING theſe important tranſactions in the Netherlands, where the interpoſition of Elizabeth rendered new efforts, on the part of Philip the Second, indiſpenſable; the king of Navarre, apprehenſive of being cruſhed by the confederacy of the crown with the forces of "the League," prepared to ſuſtain ſo ſevere a ſhock. Previous to the commencement of any military operations, he again addreſſed letters from Montauban, in Languedoc, to the different orders of the kingdom. In that to the clergy, he reprobated the ambition of the the Guiſes, who, under the veil of religion, had not ſcrupled to involve France in civil war; had compelled the king to violate his own treaties with the Hugonots; and had ſacrificed all the liberties of the Gallican church, in order to obtain the protection of the ſee of Rome. His addreſs to the nobility, by the affectionate and endearing manner, in which he implored their exertions to avert the calamities impend-

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ing over their country; and by the reluctance which he expreſſed to ſhed the blood of a claſs of ſubjects, ſelected for the ornament and defence of the throne; was calculated to make a deep impreſſion. In his letter to the third eſtate, he pointed out, and lamented the heavy burthens about to be impoſed on them, to gratify the malevolence and injuſtice of a powerful faction, who had made their ſovereign the inſtrument of their own vengeance; and who proſecuted their private animoſities, in the name, and at the expence of the nation. To the city of Paris, he recalled the recollection of their antient loyalty and adherence to their kings: he gave the juſt eulogiums to the reluctance which they had manifeſted, to contribute towards the ſupport of hoſtilities ſo unprovoked; and he profeſſed his readineſs to ſubmit all his opinions to the arbitration of a council, ſanctioned and confirmed by the ſtates general [t].

and to the city of Paris.

Military meaſures embraced by the king of Navarre.

Conſcious, while he made his appeal to the nation, that neither eloquence nor arguments would decide the conteſt; he, at the ſame time, had recourſe to arms. Too feeble in pecuniary reſources, in numbers, and in all the requiſites for a campaign, to venture to meet his opponents in the field; he embraced a ſyſtem highly favorable to the protraction of the war. Having garriſoned his caſtles, ſituated along the banks of the Dordogne, and the Garonne, which formed a barrier difficult to force; he himſelf, accompanied only by a choſen body of cavalry, and unencumbered either with baggage, or artillery; appeared wherever his preſence was neceſſary. The celerity and uncertainty of his movements: the perfect knowledge which he poſſeſſed of the country; and the deciſion of his natural character, prompt to conceive, and ſpeedy to execute; enabled him to diſconcert, or to baffle all the exertions of the enemy to force him to an action. Theſe qualities were contraſted with the habitual caution

[t] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 567—571. Chronol. Novenn. vol. i. p. 21—24.

and

and ſlowneſs which diſtinguiſhed the duke of Mayenne, in every operation. That general laboured under numerous, and almoſt inſurmountable impediments. His army, deſtitute of artillery, was diſtreſſed by the want of pay, and checked by the inclemency of the ſeaſon. Matignon, jealous of his interference in a province, of which he himſelf was governor; and ſecretly prompted by the king to proſecute the war with languor; interpoſed perpetual obſtacles and delays. After waſting nearly three months before they entered Guienne, during which time the troops were conſiderably diminiſhed by diſtempers, an open miſintelligence broke out between the commanders. When their operations at length commenced, they were limited to the ſiege and capture of ſome unimportant towns; and Mayenne, irritated with the difficulties oppoſed to his progreſs, only waited for the concluſion of the campaign, to demand his diſmiſſion from ſo inglorious and unprofitable a ſervice [a].

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1586. Impediments to the progreſs of the royal army.

In every part of Poitou and Saintonge, where the principal ſtrength of the Hugonots was concentered, the exertions were equally feeble and indeciſive. The prince of Condé, returning from England, where Elizabeth had ſupplied him with money, and given him a ſquadron for his eſcort; repaired his late diſaſter before Angers, by redoubled vigilance and activity. Formed for the hardſhips and dangers of the field, his heart had, notwithſtanding, been ſenſible to the attractions of Catherine Charlotte de la Tremouille; and motives of policy combining with his inclinations, he ſoon after eſpouſed her, at the city of Taillebourg. She was in the bloom of youth, ſprung from an illuſtrious family, and ſiſter to the duke de la Tremouille, who, having embraced the reformed religion, brought a vaſt acceſſion of force to his new ally. Notwithſtanding theſe circumſtances, which ſeemed to promiſe ſo much felicity, no nuptials were ever more inauſpicious, nor terminated by a more tra-

Feeble operations.

Marriage of the prince of Condé.

16th March.

[a] Davila, p. 589—592. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 560—566, and 578—582, and 586—592. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 24—32.

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gical cataſtrophé. Biron, meanwhile, at the head of a conſiderable body of ſoldiers, approached Rochelle, and laid ſiege to Marans, a town in its vicinity: but, hoſtilities in that quarter were ſhortly afterwards ſuſpended by an armiſtice, agreed on between him and the king of Navarre. It was deſigned to facilitate a conference, which Catherine of Medecis, at Henry's entreaty, undertook to manage, with the view of concluding a final accommodation. Alarmed at the firſt intelligence of ſuch a deſign, the duke of Guiſe, who was ſtationed at the other extremity of the kingdom, on the frontiers of Champagne, in order to oppoſe the entrance of the Germans; began to remonſtrate, in terms approaching to menace. His efforts to prevent a treaty, which he foreſaw, muſt be fatal to all his ambitious projects, were powerfully ſupported by the Papal nuntio; and the diſcontent of the Pariſians, which already threatened an inſurrection in the capital, rendered a peace with the king of Navarre, a meaſure no leſs unpopular, than dangerous [3].

1586. Armiſtice. Auguſt.

Oppoſition of the duke of Guiſe, to a pacification.

Indolence of Henry.

Amidſt ſo many calamities, by which France was deſolated; and with the proſpect of ſtill greater evils before him, Henry preſerved all the indolence and ſupineneſs of his character. Concealed in the receſſes of the Louvre, and beſieged by rapacious minions; he emerged at intervals from his repoſe, only to render himſelf ſupremely odious, or contemptible. His recreations were as deſtitute of dignity, as they were proofs of an enervated and effeminate diſpoſition. He was not aſhamed to expoſe himſelf to the view of his people, ſurrounded with dogs, monkeys, and perroquets, at a time when the kingdom groaned under accumulated, and almoſt inſupportable misfortunes. The expences incurred for objects ſo worthleſs and puerile, exceeded belief; and augmented the public indignation. It exhauſted the treaſury, to ſupport them, and to maintain the armies acting againſt

His profuſion, and oppreſſions.

[3] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 573—577, and 583—586. Davila, p. 592—594, and p. 600. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 19—22. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 300—304.

the Hugonots, notwithſtanding the contributions levied from the clergy, and the alienation of a conſiderable portion of the royal domain. In this embarraſſment, ſeventeen new edicts, impoſing taxes, were ſent to the parliament of Paris, by the royal order. But, the members, with a generous ſpirit of reſentment at the abuſe of the prerogative of the crown, refuſed to regiſter impoſitions ſo oppreſſive. Henry was neceſſitated to appear in perſon, in order to ſurmount their oppoſition; and his preſence was productive of ſubmiſſion. The murmurs, excited by ſuch arbitrary and injudicious meaſures, were not leſs univerſal; and experience evinced to him, how dangerous it is, to exhauſt the patience and loyalty of a great people. CHAP. VI. 1586. 16th June.

Paſſing rapidly from the extreme of luxury and diſſipation, to the renunciations of a ſevere and monaſtic life; the king, not content with mingling in proceſſions, and undertaking pilgrimages to various altars or ſhrines, renowned for their ſanctity; abandoned frequently all the duties and functions annexed to his high ſtation, in order to immure himſelf with Hieronimites, or Feuillans. Theſe orders of Monks, introduced by himſelf, and the former of which he had cauſed to be brought from Spain, were placed in the wood of the caſtle of Vincennes, in the immediate vicinity of Paris, where cells were conſtructed for their accommodation; or in the ſuburbs, cloſe to the palace of the Louvre and the Tuilleries. After paſſing ſome days in the ſuppoſed exerciſe of mortification and abſtinence among them, he ſuddenly re-appeared, in the habit of a penitent, followed by a number of Flagellants. He even carried his devotion, or hypocriſy, to ſo great a length, as to wear about his waiſt, a large chaplet, the grains of which were cut into the ſhape of ſkulls. Mixing a capricious taſte for the elegant arts, with the practices of ſuperſtition; he amuſed himſelf with collecting, at whatever price, the moſt coſtly paintings upon vellum, executed by the greateſt artiſts of Italy; and with theſe he ornamented the walls of his chapels. So many ſymp- Monaſtic and ſuperſtitious practices of the king. His amuſements and recreations.

CHAP. VI. 1586.

toms of a depraved, or alienated underſtanding, made a deep impreſſion on the minds of the inhabitants of the metropolis; who, inflamed by ſeditious preachers, and no longer reſtrained by any reſpect for the perſon, or character of their ſovereign, began to liſten to the moſt daring propoſals of inſurrection and rebellion *.

He goes to Lyons.

23d July.

The Proteſtant princes of Germany having determined to ſend an embaſſy to Paris, in order to ſupplicate the king to terminate the war commenced againſt the Hugonots; he quitted the capital, and repaired to Lyons. Various motives induced him to undertake a journey of ſuch diſtance, at ſo critical a juncture. By delaying to give audience to the German embaſſadors, he hoped to retain their ſovereigns in uncertainty as to his intentions reſpecting peace; and he naturally concluded, that they would ſuſpend their ultimate reſolution of ſending an army to the aſſiſtance of the Proteſtants, till they ſhould be convinced that it was indiſpenſable. He was anxious to know the reſult of the intended conference between his mother and the king of Navarre, which might entail conſequences of the laſt importance to his own repoſe, and to the general felicity of the kingdom. An inducement more powerful than any of a political nature; the deſire to ſuperintend, in ſome meaſure, the motions of his two favorites, Joyeuſe, and Epernon; impelled him to fix his reſidence at Lyons. Not ſatisfied with the acquiſition of offices, dignities, and emoluments of every kind, the ambition of theſe minions aſpired to the ſeparate command of two armies; and the facility of Henry, which equalled his profuſion, immediately accorded their requeſt, though they poſſeſſed ſcarcely any other qualities requiſite for the employment, except perſonal courage. Their views were likewiſe widely different, in ſoliciting the charge. Joyeuſe, who had paſſed the zenith of his favor, and who leaned towards the intereſts of "the League;" entering the Gevaudan, di-

Motives for his journey.

Armies entruſted to Joyeuſe and Epernon.

Conduct of Joyeuſe.

* L'Etoile, p. 206. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 310 and 311. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 594, and p. 599.

rected

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rected all the force of his exertions againſt the Hugonots. As they had no regular troops to oppoſe him, he penetrated into that mountainous country, made himſelf maſter of ſeveral towns, and exerciſed the utmoſt violence againſt the unfortunate priſoners who fell into his hands. But, Epernon, whoſe influence continually augmented, and exceeded any limits; who had evinced his partiality to the intereſts of the king of Navarre; and who was not leſs odious to, than he, in turn, deteſted the Guiſes; was animated by very oppoſite inclinations. He had recently received from the bounty of the king, his maſter, the government of Provence, become vacant by the death of Henry, count of Angouleme, natural ſon to Henry the Second. Such was, however, the authority acquired by the partizans of the duke of Guiſe in that province, that it was doubtful whether the new governor could eſtabliſh his power among a people diſaffected to his perſon, and who had thrown off all reſpect for the orders of the crown. The entrance of Epernon was not a little facilitated by a ſignal victory which Leſdiguieres, at the head of the Proteſtants, obtained over the troops of the zealous Catholics, conducted by the baron de Vins, a ſteady adherent of "the League." Aided by ſo opportune an event, Epernon, with a well-appointed army, and a numerous artillery, found little reſiſtance; and availing himſelf of the laſſitude, or inferiority of the two parties, he ſurmounted all oppoſition [5].

Oppoſite inclinations of Epernon.

Wearied with the complaints of the German embaſſadors, who having arrived at Paris, waited with impatience for the king's return, in order to obtain an audience; Henry reluctantly repaired to the metropolis. The delegates, addreſſing him in the names of the three Proteſtant electors, of Saxony, Brandenburg, and the Palatine, as well as of many inferior ſtates of the em-

Henry returns to Paris.

[5] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 304 and 305, and 308 and 309. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 599—605, and 615—619. Davila, p. 602—604.

pire;

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1586. 12th October. Remonſtrances of the German princes.

pire; cauſed their letters to be publickly read. Thoſe princes repreſented, with a plain and hardy frankneſs, not only the calamities which he inflicted upon France, by perſecuting his ſubjects; but, the diſhonor and infamy annexed to an unprovoked violation of his own edicts of toleration. In the names of their reſpective ſovereigns, they beſought him to ſuſpend the further progreſs of the war; and they offered him all the ſupport which he might think proper to demand, or accept, if he would turn his efforts againſt ſuch as had dared to excite commotions in his dominions, and to conſpire againſt his dignity and repoſe. Henry was much more ſenſible to the ſeverity of the former part of the remonſtrance, in which his faith and honor were attacked; than he was touched by the entreaties, or affected by the offers of the German princes. In his reply, he adopted a tone, not only of reſentment, but, of indignation; and regardleſs of the conſequences, he diſmiſſed the embaſſadors with expreſſions of contempt and inſult[6].

Reply of Henry.

Meaſures of the duke of Guiſe.

Far from being mollified or diſarmed by theſe demonſtrations of his averſion to the Hugonots; the duke of Guiſe ſeemed to proceed with augmented boldneſs and celerity, towards the final execution of his deſigns. While, on one hand, he cauſed all the actions of Henry to be miſrepreſented by his emiſſaries, and attributed his recent treatment of the Germans, to profound diſſimulation; on the other, he employed the troops under his command, in enterprizes unauthorized by the king, contrary to his orders, and injurious to his intereſts. As the territories of the duke of Bouillon, who profeſſed the reformed religion, might greatly facilitate the entrance of foreign forces into Champagne; it was determined to invade them, although no provocation had been given, nor act of

[6] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 606—610. Davila, p. 604—606.

hoſtility

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hoſtility committed on his part. Donzy, and afterwards Rocroi, were attacked, and taken by the duke of Guiſe: who, continuing his incurſions, made himſelf maſter of Raucour, and menaced Sedan itſelf, the capital of the principality. He was diverted from the further proſecution of the enterprize, by the refuſal of the city of Auxonne in Burgundy, to receive a garriſon in the name of the duke of Mayenne. The place was inſtantly inveſted, and captured; while the duke of Aumale, another prince of his family, governor of Picardy, ſeized upon Dourlens, and the principal towns along the banks of the Somme. All the eaſtern provinces, including a vaſt portion of France, extending nearly from the gates of Calais, uninterruptedly, to thoſe of Lyons, were already in the dependance of "the League." The chiefs of the union, emboldened by Henry's timidity, and irritated at the obſtacles which he had contrived to oppoſe to the military progreſs of Mayenne, met at the abby of Orcamp, near Noyon, in Picardy; where they proceeded to embrace reſolutions ſubverſive of all obedience to the crown. They agreed to continue the war undertaken againſt the duke of Bouillon; to render themſelves maſters of the whole duchy; and regardleſs of the king's approbation, whom they accuſed of indirectly ſuſtaining the Hugonots, to puſh their operations with redoubled vigor, in every poſſible direction[7].

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He attacks the duke of Bouillon.

Power of the League.

30th September.

Reſolutions of the chiefs.

While the duke of Guiſe was thus employed; the king, averſe to a war which interrupted his habitual indolence; terrified at the proſpect of a foreign army of Germans, which impended over his dominions; and incenſed at the daring projects of a faction, no longer reſtrained by any remains of allegiance or duty; turned his whole attention towards the reſult of the conference between his mother and the king of Navarre. Catherine of Medecis, ſinking

Views and meaſures of Henry.

[7] Davila, p. 614—616. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 610—612. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 304 and 307.

in

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in years, and oppreſſed by infirmities, did not decline an occaſion of exerting her influence, and rendering her ſervices neceſſary. If ever, in any of her negotiations with the Hugonots, ſhe can be regarded as having acted with ſincerity, it was on this occaſion. She ſaw the ruin into which her ſon was plunged, and to which ſhe had, herſelf, been acceſſary, by the indirect ſupport given to the projects of the Guiſes. An expedient preſented itſelf for uniting the two kings, while it perpetuated the crown in her own deſcendants, and effectually cruſhed the pernicious attempts of the enemies of the ſtate. Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, was not only deſtitute of iſſue; but, her abandoned conduct and diſſolute life had rendered her unworthy to aſcend the throne, or even to ſhare her huſband's bed. Sheltered among the mountains of Auvergne, ſhe was already forgotten; and it could not be difficult to obtain from the ſee of Rome, a diſſolution of the marriage. Chriſtina, princeſs of Lorrain, grand-daughter of Catherine, and niece of Henry, might ſupply Margaret's place; and the beauty of her perſon was encreaſed by the modeſty of her deportment. To give its full effect to the propoſition, Chriſtina accompanied the queen-mother to St. Brix, a ſmall town on the Charente, near Cognac, in Angoumois; where, after many difficulties and precautions, the king of Navarre repaired. The interview commenced by mutual reproaches, calculated to conceal the real object of the conference; but, in the more private communications, Catherine, by authority of her ſon, offered him the young princeſs, together with a declaration of his right to the throne, in caſe of the death of Henry without male iſſue. She enforced it by every argument drawn from his own ſituation, and that of the kingdom itſelf, which ſo loudly called for an effectual remedy to its multiplied and encreaſing misfortunes. His reſumption of the Catholic religion, and his return to court, were the ſacrifices demanded of the king of Navarre. Flattering as were the offers, he, notwithſtanding, rejected them, after a

Interview of St. Brix. 18th October.

Offers of Catherine, to the king of Navarre.

delay

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delay of only two days. The ſame reaſons, which had influenced his determination when Epernon was diſpatched to him by Henry, not only ſubſiſted in their full force, but were even ſtrengthened by the interval of time. He was well acquainted with the king's averſion to the Hugonots: he diſtruſted Catherine; and he was not ignorant, that negotiations with the Guiſes were carrying on, at the moment when the animoſity of the royaliſts and the adherents of "the League" ſeemed to render all reconciliation between them impoſſible. Above every other conſideration, he dreaded, with reaſon, to commit himſelf a ſecond time, to the mercy of a faithleſs prince, and of a tumultuous capital, deſtitute of obedience, inflamed by ſeditious demagogues, and the populace of which held his perſon and religion in equal execration. The queen-mother vainly attempted to ſurmount impediments of ſuch magnitude, by urging the impoſſibility of Henry's entering into new and indiſſoluble connexions with a heretic. All her arguments were ineffectual; and the king of Navarre, after reiterating his profeſſions of loyalty to the crown, and of gratitude to his ſovereign, whom he offered to join, with his own and the German auxiliaries, in order to exterminate their common enemies; withdrew from the conference. It was continued for ſome time longer, in the name of the two kings, by the intervention of the duke of Nevers, and the viſcount Turenne; but, far from diminiſhing the difficulties oppoſed to an accommodation, they only rendered them more apparent and inſurmountable[a].

Motives for their rejection.

Ineffectual concluſion of the conference.

The

[a] Davila, p. 616—620. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 619—622. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 22—24. Chronol. Novennaire, vol. i. p. 31 and 32.

Davila alone, of all the contemporary hiſtorians, ſeems to have been fully informed of the ſecret object of the conference of St. Brix, and of the offer of the princeſs Chriſtina of Lorrain, as the future wife of the king of Navarre. His relation of every circumſtance attending the interview, is too minute, and his authorities are known to have been too high, to call in queſtion his veracity. De Thou, who in all reſpects, muſt be regarded as the moſt judicious and able writer of his age, does not appear to have been acquainted with the concealed nature of Catherine's propoſals, nor even to have known that Chriſtina herſelf was conducted to St. Brix.

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1587. State of the metropolis.

The indefatigable exertions of the partizans of "the League" had, in no part of the kingdom, been attended with ſuch complete ſucceſs, as among the inhabitants of the metropolis; where the perſonal weakneſſes and vices of the ſovereign being more intimately known, had withdrawn the obſcurity, which veiled the throne from the reſt of Henry's ſubjects, placed at a diſtance from the ſeat of government. His ill-timed clemency and lenity; if the inactivity and apathy of that prince, can be juſtly ſo entitled; towards all thoſe who diſtinguiſhed themſelves by acts of daring outrage againſt him, ſeemed to ſecure impunity, and to provoke reſiſtance.

He omits her name, at leaſt, in his enumeration of the perſons of diſtinction, who accompanied the queen-mother, though he mentions Catherine of Bourbon, abbeſs of Soiſſons, aunt to the king of Navarre. In D'Aubigné, are contained many curious, and intereſting particulars concerning the interview; but, neither in his recital, nor in the "Chronologie "Novennaire," is the offer of Chriſtina ſpecified. Thoſe authors were probably ignorant of the fact. Sully paſſes over the conference of St. Brix: and there is no mention whatever of it, in the "Journal d'Henry III." Even, by the teſtimony of Davila, whoſe partiality towards his benefactreſs, Catherine of Medicis, renders him on that point, more deſerving of credit; the king of Navarre was juſtified in not accepting the propoſals made to him, however apparently brilliant. It appears, that, at the very moment when Henry commiſſioned his mother to urge their immediate acceptance, he was treating with the heads of "the League;" and that he had aſſured the papal Nuntio, the duke of Guiſe, and the Pariſians, of his determination to conclude no treaty with the Hugonots, which would not be ultimately for the benefit of the Catholic religion. If we reflect on the ſimilar proteſtations made by Charles the Ninth, to the Legate, before the maſſacre of Paris; and if we conſider how little reliance could be placed on the oaths of ſo fickle a prince as Henry the Third, or ſo treacherous and faithleſs a woman as the queen-mother, ſecretly attached to the party of the Guiſes; we ſhall ſee ample reaſon for approving the determination of the king of Navarre: independant of every motive drawn from thoſe ſentiments of honor, decorum, and conſcience, which muſt have oppoſed a renunciation of his religion.

D'Aubigné relates, that the duke of Nevers, ſaid to the king of Navarre, in the courſe of the converſations; "Sire, you would act bet-"ter to make your court to our common ſove-"reign and maſter, than to the mayor of Ro-"chelle, from whom, in your greateſt neceſ-"ſity, you cannot extort the ſmalleſt aſſiſt-"ance." "We do not (anſwered that prince) "underſtand the ſcience of impoſing contribu-"tions; for, we have no Italians among us: "but, at Rochelle, I do every thing that I "wiſh, by only deſiring to do what I ought." Under Henry the Third, almoſt all the financiers, contractors, and perſons who farmed the revenues, were natives of Italy.

It is ſomewhat ſingular, that De Thou fixes the conference, on the 13th of December; D'Aubigné, in the beginning of March; and Davila, on the 18th of October. As there were many interviews, and much time conſumed in them, we muſt account for ſo extraordinary a contradiction of theſe three hiſtorians, from that circumſtance.

Every

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Every art, calculated to inflame a bigotted, ſanguinary, and furious multitude, was practiſed in order to render the king odious, as well as ſuſpected. Their credulity, proportioned to their ignorance, made them ſuſceptible of any impreſſion, and led them to ſwallow the moſt improbable fictions. Notwithſtanding the inconteſtible proofs which, throughout his whole reign, the king had given of attachment to the antient religion, and of an equal averſion to the reformed doctrines; the Pariſians conſidered him as privately leagued with the king of Navarre, for the extirpation of the Catholic faith. His retirements to Vincennes, for the oſtenſible purpoſes of maceration and devotion, were ſtigmatized, as only concealing the moſt enormous and profligate debaucheries. Even the clergy, with the exception of certain monaſtic orders whom he peculiarly favoured and enriched; became the inſtruments to withdraw from him the allegiance of the people. In the confeſſionals, every treaſonable and ſeditious principle was ſilently inculcated, and deeply impreſſed; while, from the pulpit, the more eloquent and audacious preachers declaimed againſt their ſovereign, and openly expoſed his enormities, or arraigned his adminiſtration. Already, in almoſt all the various profeſſions, trades, and obſcure walks of inferior life, throughout the capital, perſons ſelected for their activity and zeal, met, under cover of the night, to communicate their operations, and to compare their reſpective proceedings.

Credulity of the Pariſians.

Diſaffection of the clergy.

Paris being divided into ſixteen wards, or diſtricts, a council, compoſed of as many men, choſen from each, was formed, in order to direct and ſuperintend the movements of the ſubordinate actors. Many individuals, alarmed at the pretended danger of a ſubverſion of the national religion, though not otherwiſe diſaffected to the crown, were admitted to the nocturnal aſſemblies, and gradually initiated in their myſteries. Among the moſt diſtinguiſhed leaders of the cabal, was Buſſy le Clerc; who, after having been a fencing-maſter, had obtained a place of ſolicitor

Plans for an inſurrection.

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in the parliament of Paris. La Chappelle Marteau, a man of deſperate fortune, purſued by his creditors, occupied likewiſe a high place in the ſeditious meetings. They all received their inſtructions from Mainville, the agent and miniſter of the duke of Guiſe; a young man of ſuperior extraction, poſſeſſing eloquence, capacity, and an unbounded devotion to the cauſe in which he had engaged. Theſe qualities were, however, contraſted with equal arrogance, inſolence, and temerity [9].

Arts of the League to inflame the Pariſians.

Many artifices were uſed, and numerous expedients deviſed, in order to ſuſtain the flame of ſedition among the multitude. The confeſſors denied abſolution to ſuch as refuſed to enter into the aſſociation: proceſſions, not only of the inhabitants of Paris, but from Picardy, Lorrain, and other provinces; compoſed of perſons of both ſexes, dreſſed in white, and having croſſes on their habits, continually kept alive the general ferment; while they were favorable to the deſigns of the chief conſpirators. Emiſſaries of approved zeal and capacity, were ſent into the country, to ſpread the tenets, and augment the proſelytes of "the League." They artfully addreſſed themſelves to thoſe whoſe embarraſſed circumſtances, or profligate character, rendered their ſeduction eaſy; and they exaggerated the forces, military and pecuniary, poſſeſſed by the duke of Guiſe, who was the object of their ſupreme idolatry.

So numerous and ardent a body of men, was diſpoſed to engage in ſchemes the moſt deſperate; nor could they be reſtrained, without difficulty, from anticipating the cautious projects of the leaders, and proceeding to immediate extremities. As a prelude to greater and more deciſive enterprizes, an attempt was formed againſt the city of Boulogne, of which Epernon was governor. Mendoza, the Spaniſh embaſſador, urged the execution of the plan,

Enterprize againſt Boulogne.

[9] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 649—652. Davila, p. 606. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 12—15.

with

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with a view of ſecuring a port in the Britiſh channel, which, from its advantageous ſituation, might afford a ſafe and convenient place of refreſhment or retreat, to the Spaniſh Armada, deſtined againſt England. In order to obtain the conſent of the duke of Guiſe and the principal Pariſians, he promiſed them, that Philip, when they were poſſeſſed of Boulogne, would openly join his forces, and act in concert with "the League." All the preparations for conducting the attack, were made with ſuch ſecrecy and ability, that its ſucceſs ſeemed to have been certain, if it had not been revealed by one of the perſons engaged in the deſign. Poulain, a ſubordinate officer of the police; although in indigent circumſtances, yet moved by ſcruples of honor or loyalty, divulged it to Chiverny the chancellor. Precautions ſo effectual were taken in conſequence, that the ſcheme was not only rendered abortive; but, Vetus, the conductor of it, was made priſoner; and the duke of Aumale, governor of Picardy, who had advanced to ſupport the aſſailants, eſcaped with difficulty from an ambuſcade, placed to intercept his retreat. Notwithſtanding the audacity of an enterprize ſo treaſonable, Henry had the weakneſs, at the ſolicitation of the duke of Guiſe, to liberate Vetus, after a detention of a few months, and to bury in oblivion the whole proceeding [10].

It is divulged, and prevented.

Encouraged by the king's puſillanimity, and almoſt ſecure of impunity, the leaders proceeded to acts of a more atrocious nature. Although the abſence of Guiſe, and his exhortations not to precipitate affairs, in ſome degree, reſtrained their ardor; yet, on the arrival of his brother, Mayenne, from his campaign againſt the king of Navarre, the Pariſians laid before him a project, of no leſs magnitude, than enormity. It had for its object, the ſeizure of the king, whom they propoſed to confine in a monaſtery: the impriſonment, or maſſacre of his miniſters and favorites;

Project for ſeizing, and impriſoning Henry.

[10] Davila, p. 607 and 608. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 653—658.

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the capture of the Baſtile, the Temple, the Arſenal, and the Louvre; and the formation of a government, compoſed of their own adherents. As the pillage of the metropolis might become an unavoidable conſequence of the execution of the plan; and as their troops might diſband, in order to plunder; meaſures of prevention were taken, by preparing barricades, compoſed of earth, and chains which could be ſtretched acroſs the principal ſtreets. Eight thouſand armed men were aſſerted to be in readineſs, for effecting the enterprize. Mayenne, naturally cautious, and little diſpoſed to engage in ſchemes which muſt be committed to a tumultuous and ungovernable populace; was ſhocked at the atrocity, as well as overcome by the immenſity of the propoſition. He, notwithſtanding, after ſome heſitation and repugnance, conſented to avow and join the conſpirators, if ſucceſsful.

The king receives information of it.

Henry, warned of the deſign, by the ſame faithful ſpy, who had already fruſtrated the machinations of the Pariſians; loſt no time in taking effectual ſteps for his own preſervation. The chiefs, ignorant of the quarter from whence they were betrayed; but, deterred by the king's precautions, poſtponed their meaſures: while Mayenne, terrified, and expecting hourly to be arreſted, or executed as a traitor, was reduced to the neceſſity of feigning indiſpoſition. Encouraged, at length, by the ſilence of the government; he ventured to withdraw from Paris, after previouſly repairing to the Louvre, to take leave of his ſovereign. Inſtead of ſeizing, and bringing him to puniſhment, Henry diſmiſſed him with a ſarcaſtic reprimand, calculated to incenſe, but, not to deter him from repeating ſuch criminal attempts; and the leaders, whom he left behind in the capital, neither diſheartened, nor dejected, ventured to renew them, though with ſimilar ſucceſs. The remonſtrances and menaces of the duke of Guiſe, alarmed leſt ſuch premature efforts ſhould prevent the final accompliſhment, which time and occaſion could alone mature; with difficulty

Alarm of the duke of Mayenne, at its diſcovery.

impoſed

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impoſed a reſtraint on their impetuous paſſions, and withheld them from open inſurrection [11].

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While theſe appearances of popular diſcontent manifeſted themſelves in the metropolis; the proſpect was not leſs gloomy in every other quarter. The king, whoſe inſurmountable indolence had allowed the factions of his court to attain a degree of ſtrength which he could no longer controul; ſaw his dominions on the point of being ravaged by foreign, as well as by domeſtic enemies. On one hand, the German auxiliaries prepared to march to the aſſiſtance of the Hugonots, and might be ſhortly expected to enter France. On the other, he beheld the duke of Guiſe, at the head of a numerous and formidable party, ready to diſpute their paſſage, and to defend the monarchy, of which he himſelf, as ſovereign, was the natural guardian. His triumph, or his defeat, muſt even be alike fatal; ſince in the former caſe, he would be left a prey to "the League;' and in the latter, he would be at the mercy of the Proteſtants. Unable to controul the events which were to decide on the deareſt intereſts of his crown: impelled alternately by oppoſite and conflicting motives: betrayed, or abandoned by the favorites, whom his improvident prodigality had raiſed to the ſummit of greatneſs; and deſtitute of the vigor, or deciſion, requiſite to extricate him from the labyrinth in which he was bewildered, he ſuffered himſelf to be borne along by the current; and ſeemed to expect from time and accident, the means of ſurmounting or eſcaping from the accumulated dangers, which ſurrounded him on every ſide.

Critical condition of the king.

His indeciſion, and miſconduct.

The duke of Joyeuſe, leſs ſenſible to the benefits received from Henry, than actuated by jealouſy at Epernon's pre-eminence in favor; and ambitious to fill the place which the duke of Guiſe had long poſſeſſed, as head of "the League;" was deſirous to approve

Joyeuſe marches into Poitou.

[11] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 659—664. Davila, p. 608—614.

himſelf

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himſelf deſerving of ſo high a ſituation. Having obtained the command of the army deſtined to act againſt the Hugonots in the weſtern provinces, he advanced into Poitou; ſurprized ſome troops of the king of Navarre, who were occupied in pillage; and, contrary to the terms of the capitulation granted them, as well as to the laws of humanity, he cauſed them indiſcriminately to be put to the ſword. Elated by his ſucceſs, which was followed with other advantages; and uneaſy at the decline of his intereſt with the king, he returned to court; where he was a ſpectator of the new and munificent marks of affection, ſhowered upon his rival, who had recently ſolemnized his nuptials with the rich heireſs of the houſe of Candale. Mortified at Epernon's triumph, and the rapid decreaſe of his own favour: irritated by ſome expreſſions, reflecting on his perſonal courage, that Henry let fall: and humbled by receiving intelligence, that the king of Navarre had, during his abſence, driven the royal forces into Touraine, and purſued them to the banks of the Loire; Joyeuſe perceived, that only ſome great and eminent exploit could maintain him in his preſent elevation. Under that conviction, he demanded, and obtained permiſſion from the king, to force the Proteſtants to a deciſive engagement. The young nobility, apprized that a general action was about to take place; eager to acquire glory; and captivated by the liberality and affability of the commander; flocked to his banner, with demonſtrations of the greateſt ardor: while Joyeuſe, impatient to acquire the laurels, which the ſuperiority of his force ſeemed to enſure him, loſt not a moment in quitting Paris, and by rapid marches advanced to ſeek the king of Navarre [12].

Auguſt. He returns to court.

Reſumes the command.

Germans prepare to invade France.

If the fate of that prince, which drew to a criſis, powerfully attracted the national attention; the ſolicitude of the king was not leſs painfully awakened to the tranſactions on the frontiers of Lorrain and

[12] De Thou, vol. x. p. 5—10. Davila, p. 627—630. L'Etoile, p. 227. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 314 and 315.

Alſace.

Alſace. The Proteſtant ſtates, offended at the contemptuous and indignant anſwer given to their embaſſadors, in the preceding year; had aſſembled a very conſiderable army, compoſed of various nations. The Cantons of Bern and Zurich, who profeſſed the reformed religion, animated by zeal, and in defiance of the general treaties ſubſiſting between Henry and the Helvetic confederacy, levied near twenty thouſand infantry. Germany furniſhed four thouſand foot, and twelve thouſand cavalry; which were joined by the duke of Bouillon ſoon afterwards, at the head of above two thouſand French troops. Regardleſs of the Imperial mandate, iſſued by Rodolph the Second, who enjoined them to diſband their forces; they aſſembled near Straſburg, and prepared to commence their march. So vaſt a body, if they had been properly conducted, might have ſpeedily decided the conteſt in favour of the party whoſe cauſe they eſpouſed. But, far from acting in union, or obeying any common head, they were deficient in military diſcipline, deſtitute of ſubordination, and eaſily inflamed to mutiny upon every occaſion. Dhona, who exerciſed the ſupreme command, in the name, and by the authority of Caſimir, uncle to the elector palatine, poſſeſſed ſcarcely any other requiſites, except perſonal courage; and the duke of Bouillon's youth and inexperience diſqualified him for ſo arduous an employment. Notwithſtanding theſe vices in the original formation of the army, which did not manifeſt themſelves till they were matured by various circumſtances; their entrance ſpread univerſal conſternation. No force which the duke of Lorrain could oppoſe to them, was adequate to impede their progreſs; and the king of France did not betray any extraordinary alacrity to riſk his perſonal ſafety, and to endanger the monarchy, by attempting to ſtem the courſe of an inundation, which muſt ſwallow up the forces of "the League," before it could approach the throne. So convinced were the Germans and Switzers, of Henry's reluctance to diſpute their paſſage, that they regarded themſelves rather

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20th Auguſt.

Diſſentions in the army.

They enter Lorrain.

Expectations formed by them, of aſſiſtance from Henry.

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rather as his allies, than his enemies; and were deluded with the continual expectation, that, on their advancing towards the interior provinces, he would join them to cruſh their common opponents. Such a meaſure was not only juſtifiable, but, almoſt indiſpenſable, after the open attacks made on Henry's authority; and muſt have rendered him the arbiter of "the League." But, his irreſolution, his averſion to the Hugonots, and the habitual indolence which indiſpoſed him for every exertion of magnitude, overcame all other conſiderations; and though during a ſhort interview with Guiſe, which took place at Meaux, his ſuſpicions had been awakened and augmented relative to the intentions of the princes of Lorrain; yet, he iſſued orders to aſſemble forces, and prepared to oppoſe in perſon the paſſage of the Germans acroſs the Loire [13].

July.

Able conduct of the duke of Guiſe.

It muſt be confeſſed, that in no part of his life did the great endowments and ſuperior capacity of the duke of Guiſe diſplay themſelves more eminently, than againſt the foreign army with which France was menaced. Uncertain of any effectual ſupport from the crown, and conſcious that he had injured his ſovereign beyond the reach of pardon: reproached by the duke of Lorrain, with having produced the invaſion and deſolation of his dominions: unable to collect under his ſtandard a body of forces adequate to meet the enemy in the field, and to try the iſſue of a battle: beſet on every ſide with difficulties; the intrepidity of his character, and the deciſion which marked all his actions, ſupplied theſe numerous defects. Having advanced in perſon to reconnoitre the Germans, and being reduced to the neceſſity of retreating, or of engaging under manifeſt diſadvantages; he preferred death to the appearance of flight. His firmneſs, and the ſkill of his movements, extricated him from the danger, while it augmented the confidence of his followers. Retiring before the invaders, as they penetrated into Champagne, he ſtill contrived to harraſs them in their march; while the duke of

Magnanimity and courage of his meaſures.

[13] De Thou, vol. x. p. 21—27. Davila, p. 631—635.

Mayenne having aſſembled troops in his government of Burgundy, and acting in concert with him, hung upon their rear, intercepted their convoys, and began to make them experience the inconveniencies of famine. CHAP. VI. 1587.

Notwithſtanding theſe obſtacles to their progreſs, they might with eaſe have atchieved the great object of the expedition, and effected a junction with the king of Navarre. Chatillon, ſon to the celebrated Coligni, and who inherited no inconſiderable portion of his father's military talents; having been detached to meet and conduct them, earneſtly exhorted the leaders to advance towards the ſources of the Loire, and to croſs the river without delay. But, neither Dhona, nor any of the other chiefs, were poſſeſſed of ſufficient authority to enforce ſo ſalutary a counſel. The various and diſcordant parts of the army were animated by no common ſentiment, except the deſire of plunder. They dreaded the rugged and mountainous countries, through which they muſt, of neceſſity, paſs, in order to avail themſelves of Chatillon's advice; and, ſeduced by the defenceleſs, as well as fertile nature of the provinces which extend from the limits of Champagne to the gates of Orleans and Chartres, they demanded to be led into them, as abounding with proviſions, and rich in the opportunities of pillage. To this injudicious meaſure, was entirely to be attributed their deſtruction. The duke of Guiſe, informed of their internal diſputes, vigilant to take every advantage, and revolving in his mind the means of attacking them when too far engaged to retreat; continued to keep them conſtantly in ſight. They were, nevertheleſs, ſuſtained by the fallacious expectation, that the king would ſtill declare in their favor. But, when they beheld Henry himſelf, at the head of a ſecond army, occupy the banks of the Loire for a conſiderable extent, and take the moſt active meaſures to preclude them from entering Touraine, in which province they hoped to find a means of paſſing the river; their conſternation exceeded any limit. Such was their perilous and almoſt deſperate ſituation,

Diſcord in the German camp.

Miſconduct and errors of the chiefs.

Perilous ſituation of the army.

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at the period, when, in another quarter of the kingdom, the affairs of the Hugonots were completely re-eſtabliſhed by the valor and fortune of the king of Navarre [14].

Battle of Coutras.

The victory of Coutras, which produced ſo beneficial a change, was principally due to the raſhneſs and imprudence of the duke of Joyeuſe. That favorite, whoſe ambition prompted him to hazard a general engagement; unwilling to divide the honor with Matignon, who was haſtening to reinforce him, and confident in the numbers and quality of his troops; felt no other apprehenſion, except that the enemy would not wait for his approach. But, the king of Navarre, far from avoiding an action, having aſſembled a ſmall body of hardy and experienced veterans, croſſed the river Dordogne; and the two armies faced each other near the town of Coutras, in Guienne. The contraſt was not leſs ſingular, than was preſented by the Perſians and Macedonians, in the plains of Iſſus. Among the royal forces, every diſplay of magnificence and luxury was viſible; while the Proteſtants, caſed in armour, ruſty and defaced by the inclemency of the weather, exhibited a martial and rough appearance. Nor was the arrogance and want of ſubordination in the Catholic troops, leſs forcibly oppoſed to the diſcipline and ſevere obedience of the Hugonots. The effect correſponded to theſe cauſes; and never was triumph more rapid, or more compleat, than at Coutras. Above two thouſand of the royaliſts were left dead upon the field, and all the baggage, artillery, and ſtandards, fell into the hands of the conquerors. Joyeuſe himſelf, after having diſplayed the greateſt perſonal courage, was put to death, although he offered a prodigious ſum to obtain his ranſom. The Proteſtants, incenſed at the recent ſlaughter of their comrades in Poitou, long refuſed to grant quarter; and it required all the exertion of the king of Navarre to ſtop the carnage. His humanity towards the van-

Aſpect of the two armies.

20th October.

Victory of the king of Navarre.

[14] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 317—320. Davila, p. 637—646. De Thou, vol. x. p. 25—42. D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 62 and 63.

quiſhed,

quiſhed, and peculiarly to the priſoners who remained in his poſſeſſion, was not leſs conſpicuous than his valour in the action, and drew eulogiums from his enemies. The victory was rendered more memorable and conſpicuous, from its having been the only one obtained by the Hugonots, during the courſe of more than twenty-ſeven years, ſince the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, and the commencement of the civil wars. Henry received the intelligence, not only without any emotions of concern, but, rather with ſentiments of pleaſure. He wiſhed to compel the king of Navarre to accept the conditions which had been tendered him; but, was no way deſirous of his deſtruction, or of any event that could augment the power of their common enemies. The ſpoils of Joyeuſe ſerved to decorate his rival, who obtained from the king the government of Normandy, and the poſt of high admiral, notwithſtanding the importunities and ſolicitation of Guiſe, who vainly exerted himſelf to obtain the latter employment for Briſſac, one of his own adherents. To theſe ample gratifications, Henry's profuſion, which ſeemed to know no bounds, added the governments of Saintonge and Angoumois; donations, only calculated to encreaſe the general deteſtation, in which Epernon was held by all the adherents of the family of Lorrain [15].

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Sentiments of Henry, on Joyeuſe's defeat and death.

Scarcely any advantage reſulted to the Germans and Switzers, from ſo brilliant a victory, obtained by the king of Navarre. That prince, unable to retain under his banners the troops with whom he had conquered, or to prevent the nobility and gentry who voluntarily adhered to him, from withdrawing to their caſtles; inſtead of advancing towards the Loire, immediately returned into Gaſcony. Perhaps, his attachment to the counteſs of Grammont, at whoſe feet he depoſited the trophies of his valour; and the facility with which, at every period of his life, he ſacrificed his intereſts to the allurements of gallantry; might induce him

King of Navarre returns into Gaſcony.

[15] D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 48—58. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 320—322. De Thou, vol. x. p. 12—18. Davila, p. 646—651.

to

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to adopt a conduct, by which his glory was not a little obſcured. It proved deſtructive to the foreign army, conducted by Dhona, for whoſe extrication, the greateſt exertions would not have been more than ſufficient, and who, thus abandoned, could neither proceed with confidence, nor retreat with ſafety. Embarraſſed with plunder, incommoded by a prodigious quantity of baggage, and diminiſhed by diſeaſes reſulting from their intemperance; they no longer inſpired the terror which had preceded and accompanied their entrance into France. As they continued their march, various bodies of troops, commanded by the princes of Lorrain, or by the king in perſon, ſtraitened their quarters, and augmented their diſtreſs. The duke of Guiſe, anxious to engroſs the whole reputation reſulting from their defeat; exerted equal vigilance in diſcovering, as he did promptitude in profiting of their errors. While, on one hand, he conſtantly placed himſelf between the enemy and the city of Paris, with a view to prevent their approaching the capital; he, on the other, waited to ſeize the firſt favorable opportunity of attacking them with advantage. Fortune ſoon preſented him the occaſion; and he inſtantly embraced it, in contradiction to the cautious advice of the duke of Mayenne, who was not induced without reluctance, to commit the fortune of their family to ſo imminent a hazard. Having obtained information, that a conſiderable number of the French and German cavalry, was lodged at the town of Vimory, he cauſed them to be ſurrounded during the night; and after an obſtinate reſiſtance, during which, Dhona, their commander, eſcaped with difficulty, his troops were either routed, or put to the ſword [16].

State of the German army.

They are harraſſed by the duke of Guiſe,

and defeated at Vimory.

28th October.

They ſtill advance towards the Loire.

Notwithſtanding this defeat, which inſpired the troops of "the "League" with as much confidence, as it diminiſhed the ardor of the confederates, they continued to advance, in hopes of pene-

[16] De Thou, vol. x. p. 43—45. Davila, p. 651—656.

trating

trating through the intermediate provinces to the banks of the Loire, and paſſing it near Saumur. Their courage was not a little revived by the junction of the prince of Conti, Francis of Bourbon, whoſe high quality, and proximity of blood to the king of Navarre, ſufficiently demonſtrated the intereſt which he took in their ſucceſs. His arrival was celebrated by feſtivities and teſtimonies of public joy, which were augmented by the intelligence of the victory obtained at Coutras. But, all theſe premature demonſtrations of ſatisfaction were ſpeedily ſucceeded by a reverſe. Dhona having imprudently quartered a part of his forces in the little town of Auneau, where they remained during ſome days, for the purpoſe of recovering their fatigues; Guiſe, who had encamped at Dourdan, found means to corrupt the governor of the fortreſs. In conſideration of a ſum of money, he promiſed to admit the duke's troops through the caſtle itſelf; and the enterprize was executed with the moſt complete ſucceſs. The enemy, unprepared for defence, and unapprehenſive of danger, were inveſted on every ſide, attacked, and cut to pieces before they could make any effectual reſiſtance. Two thouſand Germans periſhed in the action. Dhona, having effected his eſcape, at the head of a ſmall body of cavalry, ſafely reached the other diviſions of his army, who were ſtationed in the vicinity of Auneau. He inſtantly drew them up in order of battle, and urged them to attack the victors, during the ſecurity of their recent triumph. The French auxiliaries, commanded by Chatillon, joined him in theſe entreaties, and repreſented the facility of the attempt. But, no arguments could prevail on the Switzers and Germans. Struck with terror, they refuſed to be led againſt an enemy, who had twice ſurprized and defeated them, nor were any efforts effectual to vanquiſh their repugnance. Retreat, or more properly, flight, accompanied with all the calamities inſeparable from a diſpirited

Defeat of the Germans, at Auneau.

24th November.

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1587. Retreat, and ſeparation of the foreign troops.

rited army, laboring under the accumulated evils of famine, cold, and ſickneſs, became unavoidable. The Switzers, ſeparating from their allies, concluded an accommodation with the duke of Epernon, and retired to their own country; while the Germans, exhauſted, diminiſhed, and ſinking in the roads, began to liſten to ſimilar propoſitions. In this deſperate emergency, Chatillon propoſed to conduct them towards the province of the Vivarais, where they would be joined by freſh troops, and would find every refreſhment neceſſary to recruit their force. He offered to be their guide during the march, which could not be long; and he repreſented with energy and eloquence, the infallible deſtruction impending over them, if, deluded by a pretended negotiation ratified in the name of the king, they truſted to the mercy of "the "League," who had already thrown off all reſpect or obedience to the crown".

Ineffectual exhortations of Chatillon.

He quits the army.

His remonſtrances being fruitleſs, and the ſpirit of mutiny which pervaded the army, rendering his ſtay dangerous to himſelf; he quitted the camp, attended by a few reſolute and determined followers. Penetrating through the bodies of the enemy, who ſurrounded him on every ſide, he ſoon reached the provinces where the Hugonot forces maintained a ſuperiority: while Dhona, and his aſſociates, no longer reſtrained by any conſiderations of honor, or even of prudence, conſented to evacuate the French dominions, with their colours furled, and eſcorted to the frontiers of the kingdom. Conditions ſo ignominious did not ſecure their ſafe retreat; and the princes of Lorrain, regardleſs of the ſtipulations, waited for them beyond the confines. In the county of Burgundy, and even in the principality of Montbelliard, the miſerable relics of their once formidable army, were ſlaughtered by the duke of Guiſe's troops, or

Capitulation of Dhona.

17 Davila, p. 656—661. De Thou, vol. x. p. 45—60.

maſſacred

maſſacred by the peaſants. Not ſatisfied with nearly exterminating them, the ſoldiery of the duke of Lorrain exerciſed unprecedented cruelties on the inhabitants of the country of Montbelliard, and proceeded to the moſt enormous exceſſes of violence, rapine, and bloodſhed. Scarcely five hundred Germans, exhauſted with fatigue, and nearly in a ſtate of nakedneſs, reached their own homes in ſafety [18]. CHAP. VI. 1587. Deſtruction of the Germans.

Henry was little more than a paſſive ſpectator of a ſeries of victories, which covered his moſt inveterate enemy with ſo much glory. He received the intelligence of the defeat of the Germans at Auneau, without manifeſting any expreſſions of concern; and he accepted graciouſly, the trophies and ſtandards ſent him by the duke of Guiſe: but, he was not internally leſs wounded by the conviction that "the "League," elevated with ſucceſs, would ſoon turn their arms againſt himſelf. The opportunity of cruſhing the houſe of Lorrain, which had preſented itſelf, was irrecoverably loſt; and it ſeemed difficult, if not impoſſible, to expect, that the duke of Guiſe, raiſed above the rank of a ſubject, would remain long in a ſtate of repoſe. The recent events of the war, by an obvious and unavoidable compariſon, had conduced to humble the crown, in the ſame proportion that they gave ſtrength to its enemies; and the inhabitants of Paris, alienated more than ever from a king, whom they perſiſted to regard as ſecretly allied with the Hugonots; knew no bounds to their admiration for the deliverer and avenger of France. They even accuſed Epernon with favouring the eſcape of the foreign army, which muſt otherwiſe have been put to the ſword; and they conſidered Henry as participating in the pretended crime of his favourite. Under theſe impreſſions, that prince, returning from the campaign, made his public entry into the metropolis, with the decorations of a conqueror: while the duke of Conduct of Henry. His embarraſſments. He returns to Paris. 23d December.

[18] D'Aub. vol. iii. p. 65—68. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 323—326. De Thou, vol. x. p. 61—63. Davila, p. 661—663. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 37—42. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 170—178.

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Guiſe repairing to Nancy, the capital of Lorrain, and ſummoning a counſel compoſed of his neareſt friends, prepared to improve his late advantages, and to undertake more important enterprizes againſt the dignity and perſon of his ſovereign [19].

Foreign affairs.

During the courſe of ſo many internal events which occupied Henry's attention, he ſeemed to have loſt ſight of the foreign intereſts and concerns of the nation.

Execution of Mary, queen of Scots.

The execution of his ſiſter-in-law, Mary, queen of Scots, and dowager-queen of France, had been ſwallowed up in his own immediate embarraſſments. The intimate

[19] De Thou, vol. x. p. 63—65.

That Henry the Third not only expected his own extrication from the toils which "the "League" had wrapt about him, by means of the German army; but, that he even favoured the progreſs of thoſe invaders, as much as he could venture to do, conſiſtent with his own ſafety; are facts inconteſtible. There is an internal evidence of it, in his whole conduct; in the reluctance with which he took the field; in the poſition which he choſe, at a diſtance from the probable ſcene of hoſtilities, in the province of the Orleanois; in the coldneſs with which he received the intelligence of the duke of Guiſe's ſucceſs at Vimory and at Auneau; laſtly, in the terms of accommodation, by which he attempted, though vainly in a great meaſure, to ſave the remains of the Germans from the fury of the princes of Lorrain. Davila aſſerts it, and De Thou inſinuates it, throughout their whole narration of the events of that campaign. But, if any doubt could remain upon the point, it is completely done away, by the avowal of Henry himſelf, in the cleareſt and moſt unequivocal terms, contained in the curious and important diſpatch of the Engliſh embaſſador at Paris, ſir Edward Stafford, to queen Elizabeth, dated "the 25th "February, 1588;" two months after the king's return to the capital. The letter is to be found in the "Hardwick State Papers," vol. i. page 251 to 264. In a ſecret interview with the Engliſh miniſter, managed with the utmoſt caution, and during the whole courſe of which there was no third perſon preſent, Henry unveiled his lamentable condition; beſought Elizabeth's friendly aid to extricate him; and particularly, entreated her to exhort the king of Navarre to embrace the Catholic religion, as the only means to diſarm "the League." He clearly confeſſed to Stafford, that he had hoped for the deſtruction of the family of Lorrain, from the invaſion of the Germans: that, in the expectation of it, and from no other motive, he had declined and refuſed Elizabeth's repeated offers, to ſtop the entrance of the foreign army: and that he purpoſely took his own ſtation at a diſtance from them, and avoided to the laſt moment, any attack upon their forces, till it became impoſſible for him longer to adhere to ſuch a conduct. He bitterly, and with expreſſions of indignation, reprobated their cowardice, or incapacity, in not demoliſhing the feeble army, commanded by the dukes of Guiſe and Mayenne; or, at leaſt, in not ravaging and deſolating, as they might have done, the eſtates and territories of all the adherents of "the "League," who muſt, in ſuch caſe, have had recourſe to his interpoſition, to reſcue them from total ruin. He claimed, notwithſtanding, the merit of having ſaved thoſe of the Germans who eſcaped, by the treaty which the duke of Epernon concluded, for their ſafe return into their own country. No ſtate paper, publiſhed in the preſent century, merits more attention, or lays open ſo much of the private feelings of Henry with reſpect to the duke of Guiſe, as the diſpatch from Stafford to Elizabeth.

connexion

connexion of blood and friendſhip between that unfortunate princeſs, and the family of Guiſe, neceſſarily diminiſhed, if it did not extinguiſh the intereſt which he felt in her misfortunes; and it was doubted, whether the interceſſion made in her behalf by Bellievre, the French embaſſador, originated in affection and ſympathy, or was only a piece of ſtate diſſimulation. It is certain that the remonſtrance neither mollified Elizabeth, nor protracted the deſtiny of the Scottiſh queen. In the affairs of the Netherlands, which Leiceſter, the Engliſh commander, had embroiled, as well as greatly injured the reputation of the United States, the king of France took no part; and he appeared to view with the ſame indifference, the vaſt preparations making in the ports of Spain and Portugal, where Philip the Second had long been occupied in fitting out his invincible Armada, deſigned for the conqueſt of England.

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CHAP. VII.

State of France, after the defeat of the Germans.—Proceedings of the princes of Lorrain.—Death of the prince of Condé.—Conſpiracies againſt Henry.—Arrival of the duke of Guiſe, at Paris.—Inſurrection.—Flight of the king.—Negotiations.—Treaty between Henry, and the duke of Guiſe.—Convocation of the ſtates general, at Blois.—Henry determines to aſſaſſinate the duke of Guiſe.—Meaſures adopted for its execution.—Aſſaſſination of the duke and cardinal of Guiſe.

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1588. State of France,

SUCH was the critical ſituation to which the affairs of France were reduced, that it was evident ſome great convulſion muſt ſpeedily follow. The invaſion of the Germans, which if it had been conducted with vigor and capacity, muſt have driven the family of Guiſe to implore protection of Henry; had, in conſequence of the errors and misfortunes of the expedition, thrown a prodigious weight into the oppoſite ſcale. Inſtead of advancing to form a junction with them, as had been concerted; the king of Navarre, terrified at the intelligence of their defeat, and expecting the united forces of the crown and of "the League" to overwhelm him; retired, notwithſtanding his recent victory over and of Henry. Joyeuſe, to the city of Rochelle. Henry, who had only acted a negative part in the operations of the late campaign, and who had derived from it neither ſecurity, nor reputation; returned to a capital, where his perſon and his dignity were equally expoſed to perpetual inſult. The populace, more than ever intoxicated with admiration of the duke of Guiſe, to whoſe valor and military ſkill, the expulſion of the foreign army was excluſively due,

felt an augmented alienation and contempt for their ſovereign. All the treaſonable machinations and conſpiracies, which had been, in ſome meaſure, ſuſpended while the event of the recent tranſactions was uncertain, were renewed without apprehenſion. The king, agitated with continual fears, diſtruſtful of his miniſters, doubtful of the adherence even of his own mother, who indirectly favored the houſe of Lorrain, and no longer able to fix on any ſyſtem which promiſed him a probable, or ſpeedy extrication from his embarraſſments; remained inactive and ſupine, at a moment which demanded the utmoſt energy and deciſion. CHAP. VII. 1588.

On the other hand, Guiſe, conſcious of his advantages, prompt to improve them, and inclined from his character to embrace the moſt adventurous expedients for the completion of all his projects; proceeded inſtantly to avail himſelf of his augmented conſideration. In an aſſembly of the princes of his family, it was determined, notwithſtanding the reluctance manifeſted by ſome of them, who were inclined to more cautious or moderate counſels; that an attack ſhould be immediately made on the capital and territories of the duke of Bouillon. That prince was lately deceaſed at Geneva, without male iſſue; and as his contracted dominions devolved to his ſiſter, whoſe youth and ſex diſqualified her for making any vigorous defence, the occaſion of invading them was too favorable to be neglected. They reſolved at the ſame time, to preſent a new petition to Henry in the name and behalf of "the League," by which he was entreated to unite himſelf in cloſer tyes with the confederacy. The articles contained various requiſitions, calculated to degrade the throne, and to elevate on its ruins, the houſe of Guiſe. They demanded the eſtabliſhment of the inquiſition; the extirpation of hereſy; the ceſſion of new places of ſecurity, and the confirmation of thoſe already held by the adherents of "the League;" together with an army, to be maintained by the king, in order to prevent the return of the Germans into France. Inſolent and exorbitant

Deciſive meaſures of the duke of Guiſe.

January.

Petition, preſented to Henry, by the League.

as

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1588. He eludes it.

as theſe propoſitions appeared, they were not rejected by Henry, who only ſought by evaſion and delays, to elude their accompliſhment: while the emiſſaries of the Guiſes, ſcattered over the metropolis, already began to reduce into order the tumultuous and diſcordant parts of which the faction was compoſed, and to prepare matters for the final cataſtrophé [1].

Death of the prince of Condé. 5th March.

The affairs of the Hugonots, involved in diſtreſs by the defeat of the Germans, were rendered ſtill more gloomy at this period, by the unexpected loſs of one of their principal ſupports. Henry, prince of Condé, after having ſucceſsfully encountered every danger in the field, was carried off by a death, no leſs ſudden, than tragical. Inconteſtible ſymptoms of poiſon appeared during the progreſs of his diſeaſe, as well as after his diſſolution. Suſpicions, too well authenticated, fell upon the princeſs, his wife, who was ſeized, and impriſoned by order of the magiſtrates of the town of St. John d'Angely in Saintonge, the ſcene of the tranſaction. Her pregnancy, and the birth of a ſon, whom ſhe brought into the world ſix months ſubſequent to her huſband's deceaſe; rather than any proofs of her innocence, preſerved her from a more ſevere enquiry and puniſhment. She was, notwithſtanding, detained in confinement above ſix years. Brillaud, one of the prince's domeſtics, convicted of having been acceſſory to his death, was torn in pieces by wild horſes. Almoſt all the qualities which can combine to form an exalted, if not an amiable character, met in the prince of Condé. Exempt from the irregularities and gallantries of his couſin, the king of Navarre, he equalled him in valor, humanity, affability, prudence, and liberality. Unfortunate in all his enterprizes; baniſhed to an obſcure place in a diſtant province: ejected from his government of Picardy: neglected by his ſovereign: perſecuted by the Catholics: driven, during the fury of civil war, in which he had been nouriſhed from his infancy, to the ſevereſt extremities

Suſpicions of poiſon.

His character.

[1] De Thou, vol. x. p. 236—238. Davila, p. 669.

of

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of poverty, exile, and hardſhip; his fortitude raiſed him above misfortune, but, could not ſurmount his evil deſtiny. He expired in the vigor of his age, at thirty-five years; and the intelligence of his melancholy fate excited various and contradictory emotions. The king of Navarre bewailed his loſs, and undertook to avenge it, by a rigorous proſecution of his murderers. Henry, occupied in celebrating the funeral of his favourite, Joyeuſe; and ſurrounded with dangers that menaced his own ſafety, ſcarcely appeared ſenſible to ſo affecting an event. The Pariſians, by whom the prince was deteſted on account of his zealous adherence to the reformed religion, made public rejoicings to commemorate it: while, the duke of Guiſe, mindful of the uncertainty of human affairs, and who knew how to eſteem the virtues even of an enemy; ſhed tears on receiving the news, and gave proofs of the moſt unfeigned concern[z].

Different emotions, excited by his death.

[z] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 330 and 331. De Thou, vol. x. p. 242—247. Letters of Henry the Fourth, in Voltaire, vol. x. p. 232—235. Hiſt. de Bouillon, vol. i. p. 408. Mem. p. ſer. a l'Hiſ. de France, p. 243, 244. D'Aub. Hiſ. Univ. v. iii. p. 72.

The prince of Condé's death is not to be ranked among thoſe problematical, and uncertain accounts of poiſon, with which every hiſtory abounds, and which may frequently be attributed to malignity, or credulity. By the unanimous, and undiſputed teſtimony of all the contemporary writers, the prince died of poiſon: but, it is more difficult to determine, on whom the guilt of ſo atrocious a crime principally falls. Brillaud, who was executed, ſhewed marks of inſanity; and his depoſition, as de Thou aſſerts, was obſcure, or defective in many particulars. Belcaſtel, page of the princeſs of Condé, and a valet de chambre, were accuſed of having adminiſtered the potion, which cauſed his death. They fled; and the former eſcaped out of France: but, the valet was ſeized at Poitiers, and brought to St. John d'Angely. It was pretended, that the page had been criminally intimate with the princeſs; and that ſhe was pregnant by him, at the time of her huſband's death. The king of Navarre, who went immediately in perſon to St. John d'Angely, and who muſt have known every circumſtance which could elucidate the tranſaction; expreſsly accuſes the princeſs of being privy to, and an accomplice in the prince's death. De Thou, who wrote under the reign of Henry the Fourth, and at a period of time, when the princeſs was declared to be abſolved from the imputation, ſpeaks guardedly reſpecting her; but, his opinion of her guilt, is evidently to be ſeen. Mezerai poſitively aſſerts it, at a greater diſtance of time. In 1596, ſhe was liberated, by order of Henry the Fourth, and all the proceedings againſt her were burnt, as having been informal, and contrary to the privileges of her rank. L'Etoile, in his "Journal d'Henry trois," a contemporary work, makes no ſcruple of naming the princeſs, as the perſon, at whoſe inſtigation Belcaſtel poiſoned the prince. She did not bring into the world a ſon, till the 1ſt of September, 1588, near ſix calendar months ſubſequent to her huſband's death. He was afterwards Henry the Second, prince of Condé, and was father to the great Condé, ſo celebrated in the hiſtory of France.

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Deſigns and irreſolution of the duke of Guiſe.

April.

These generous, but, tranſitory ſenſations, were ſpeedily obliterated by the great and hazardous experiment which he was, at length, about to make; and on the ſucceſs of which depended his honor, his fortune, and his life. Having diſpatched a number of able, and experienced officers to Paris, who might make the neceſſary diſpoſitions previous to his perſonal appearance: and having ſtationed five hundred cavalry under the command of the duke of Aumale, in the neighbouring villages; he advanced to Goneſſe, in the vicinity of the capital, with intention to enter the ſuburbs. But, information being received, that the king had cauſed a body of four thouſand Switzers to approach the metropolis; the duke, terrified, and apprehenſive of being arreſted, returned to Soiſſons. His adherents, nevertheleſs, continued their plots againſt Henry's perſon; and although conſtantly diſcovered, yet, as no exertion was made to ſeize and bring them to puniſhment, their audacity continually encreaſed. At the head of the moſt inveterate enemies of the king, was the ducheſs of Montpenſier, ſiſter to the duke of Guiſe. Irritated by ſome ſarcaſtic and humiliating diſcloſures which he had made of her perſonal defects, ſhe determined on revenge; and her implacable ſpirit animated the Pariſians to the moſt deſperate enterprizes. It was reſolved to attack the Louvre by force, to cut in pieces the guards, and to impriſon the king. When this plan became impracticable, in conſequence of the precautions taken upon Poulain's depoſition; a new project was ſet on foot, to ſeize him on his return from Vincennes, at which time he was uſually accompanied only by a few of his guards. Henry received intimation of the deſign; and having ſent to Paris for an eſcort of cavalry, was by them conducted in ſafety through the city. Driven to deſpair by ſo many unſucceſsful attempts; expecting hourly vengeance; and unable longer to retain the numerous adherents who clamorouſly demanded to be employed; the heads of the enterprize ſent a meſſenger to the duke of Guiſe, imploring him, as he valued the ſafety of

Projects of the ducheſs of Montpenſier.

22d April.

Alarm of the malcontents.

all

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all thoſe who had embarked with him in the ſame common cauſe, not to delay his immediate appearance [3].

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This event had long been foreſeen by the king, as equally probable and alarming. With a view to prevent it, he condeſcended to an act unworthy the majeſty of the throne, by diſpatching Bellièvre, one of his miniſters, to Soiſſons, where the duke then was, together with the cardinal of Bourbon, and his principal adherents. Bellièvre's meſſage was rather to deprecate, than to prohibit his arrival; and Henry adopted the language of ſupplication, inſtead of the requiſition of authority. Far from yielding obedience to the royal injunction, the duke, in turn, had recourſe to complaints and to excuſes; leaving it uncertain whether he would obey, or diſregard the order. New meſſengers were, therefore, ſent to him from court, to reiterate the prohibition. But, Guiſe, who had embraced the final determination of appearing in perſon to extricate, or periſh with his friends in the metropolis; contrived to elude them, by taking another road. Entering Paris with only ſeven attendants, he alighted at the reſidence of the queen-mother; who, amazed, and almoſt overcome by ſo unexpected a viſit, betrayed her concern, notwithſtanding the expreſſions of ſatisfaction with which ſhe endeavoured to conceal her emotions. She inſtantly informed the king of his arrival, and ſignified her intention of bringing the duke to pay his reſpects to Henry at the Louvre.

Henry prohibits the duke of Guiſe from coming to Paris.

9th May. His arrival.

That infatuated prince, who had always deceived himſelf by an opinion that Guiſe would not preſume, in contradiction to ſo many expreſſions of his will, to inſult him in his own palace; was unable to reſolve on the manner of his reception and treatment. In a haſty and diſorderly conſultation, held during the interval which elapſed between the intelligence of his approach, and his actual ap-

Indeciſion of the king.

[3] Davila, p. 669—675, and 678. De Thou, vol. x. p. 247—251.

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pearance, various propoſitions were debated. It was even agitated, to put him to death in the cloſet where Henry meant to give him audience; and the king did not appear to be averſe from ſo violent an expedient: but the more timid, or more prudent part of his council induced him to reject the advice. Meanwhile, Guiſe, conducted by Catherine of Medecis, and followed by an immenſe crowd who preſſed to give him marks of their attachment and devotion, proceeded on foot towards the Louvre. As he paſſed along, the inhabitants of the metropolis, and peculiarly, the women, loaded him with benedictions, and expreſſed the moſt unbounded veneration for his perſon. The affability and popularity of his deportment confirmed his empire over the people, and rendered them capable of every ſacrifice, or exertion, to ſecure his ſafety. He was, notwithſtanding, appalled at his entrance into the Louvre, when he found himſelf encloſed between the Switzers of the royal guard, the archers, and other ſoldiers, drawn up, with Grillon at their head, and who received him in deep ſilence.

Reception of Guiſe by the Pariſians.

His viſit to Henry.

Henry's reception of the duke was cold and even angry; nor did he ſeem to be either mollified or convinced by the excuſes which were offered to juſtify ſo daring a meaſure. Guiſe, apprehenſive of being detained, conſcious that he was in the power of a ſovereign whom he had inſulted and incenſed, ſurrounded by enemies, and aware that every moment of his ſtay might endanger his retreat; ſhortened the interview by pretending fatigue, and withdrew, unmoleſted, from the royal preſence*. The two ſucceeding days were paſſed in continual negotiations, which only ſhewed their mutual diſtruſt. A long converſation took place at the queen-mother's palace, between the king and the duke; where the latter, no longer reſtrained by the prudential conſiderations which had influenced his conduct in the Louvre, manifeſted his pretenſions

Demands of Guiſe.

* Davila, p. 679—683. De Thou, vol. x. p. 253—255.

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without diſguiſe. They were ſo extenſive and inſolent, that, diſpoſed as the king was to make numerous ſacrifices in order to obtain peace, he rejected them, and prepared for defence. But, after having allowed his enemies to gain poſſeſſion of the capital, to inflame the minds of the people, and to make proviſion of arms, leaders, and every requiſite for commencing active war, it was not eaſy to reduce them within the limits of ſubmiſſion. Warned by the ſame vigilant and faithful ſpy, who had ſo often given him information, that nocturnal meetings were held at the duke of Guiſe's houſe, and that the conſpirators were deliberating to proceed to the laſt extremities of violence and rebellion; he iſſued orders to introduce four thouſand Switzers, under the command of Biron, and a conſiderable number of his guards, who had been quartered in the villages near Paris. They entered early in the morning, were met by Henry in perſon at the gates, and marched to occupy the principal ſquares or places in the metropolis, without oppoſition.

Henry introduces the Swiſs troops into Paris.

12th May.

Such was the conſternation occaſioned by the arrival and entrance of the royal forces, and ſo unprepared were the inhabitants for effectual reſiſtance; that if vigorous meaſures had been purſued before the firſt impreſſions of terror had ſubſided, the king might have diſarmed, or rendered himſelf maſter of the city. But, the ſame puſillanimous, and timid policy, which had enabled "the "League" to continue their operations for many years againſt the crown, rendered ineffectual the only effort exerted for its preſervation. The exhortations of Catherine of Medecis, who was inclined to favor the Guiſes, and anxious to prevent a rupture; ſtrengthened by the advice of Villequier, governor of Paris; induced Henry to iſſue peremptory orders to the commanders of the troops recently ſtationed, to uſe no violence, and to remain entirely on the defenſive. Encouraged by the tame and paſſive behaviour of the ſoldiery, and paſſing rapidly from the extreme of fear, to that of inſolence; the people, after ſome hours, began to aſſemble tumultuouſly.

His irreſolute conduct.

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Inſurrection of the Pariſians.

ouſly. Conducted and directed by the officers whom the duke of Guiſe had purpoſely ſcattered among them, while he himſelf affected to remain quiet within his houſe; the populace drove the Switzers and guards from all their poſts. At the ſame time, advancing, as the others retired, they placed barricadoes at the end of every ſtreet, ſtretched chains acroſs, and ſecured their acquiſition [s].

They barricade the ſtreets.

On the firſt intelligence received at court, that the citizens having ſhut up their ſhops, and rung the alarm bells, had collected, with intent to oppoſe the troops; Henry ſent directions to Grillon to occupy certain places, calculated to give him poſſeſſion of the quarter in which the duke of Guiſe reſided; and from whence an inſurrection was moſt to be apprehended. But, the order arrived too late: the royal forces, reſtrained from reſiſtance, by the prohibition iſſued to fire upon the inhabitants, were already ſurrounded, and equally incapable of moving forwards, or of effecting their retreat: while, the barricadoes advancing regularly, were puſhed within a few paces of the Louvre, and in the face of the body guard. Content with obliging the French troops to extinguiſh their matches, and to ground their arms; the populace ſpared their perſons. But, the Switzers, more obnoxious, as foreigners and mercenaries, being aſſaulted, were plundered; and near forty of them were put to the ſword. During ſo diſgraceful a proceeding, the king, inveſted in the Louvre, the gate of which was defended by about five hundred gentlemen and ſoldiers; beſieged by his own ſubjects; expecting to be attacked, and afraid to expoſe his perſon to the inſults of a furious and exaſperated mob; remained in a ſituation equally perilous and ignominious. The marſhals Biron, and Aumont, having ventured to harangue the people, and to perſuade them to diſperſe, were ſaluted with ſeveral muſket balls; and the king, incapable of long reſiſtance, might be conſidered as at the mercy of the inſurgents.

Dangerous and humiliating ſituation of the king.

[s] Davila, p. 684—690. De Thou, vol. x. p. 256—260.

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No triumph could be more complete on the part of the duke of Guiſe, who, if he had profited of the ardor of the Pariſians, might have inſtantly, by force, or by negotiation, ſeized on Henry himſelf. But, unprepared, or unwilling to proceed to the laſt extremity, he preferred a different mode of action. Quitting his houſe, in which he had hitherto choſen to remain, as a paſſive ſpectator of the commotion; he appeared in the ſtreets, on horſeback, unarmed, with only a truncheon in his hand. His voice and preſence inſtantly ſuſpended the tumult. Satisfied with having excited the rage of the Pariſians, and directed it againſt the king; he checked and controuled its further progreſs. As he proceeded through the different quarters of the city, he cauſed the royal troops, who were every where diſarmed, to be ſet at liberty, and conducted in ſafety to the Louvre, bare-headed, and their arms trailed along the ground. But, attentive, while he gave this proof of his unlimited aſcendant over the people, to ſecure the great object of his exertions; he commanded the barricadoes to be maintained, and the moſt vigilant watch to be obſerved, in order to prevent the king's eſcape.

Conduct of the duke of Guiſe.

He pacifies the populace.

Under circumſtances ſo diſtreſsful, that prince had recourſe to his uſual expedient of negotiation. Catherine of Medecis, continuing to mediate, viſited the duke of Guiſe, and endeavoured to accommodate matters between them. The populace, maſters of the capital, would not even permit her to paſs through the intermediate ſtreets, in her coach; and ſhe was reduced to the humiliating neceſſity of being carried in a chair, while the barricadoes, opened to admit her paſſage, were immediately cloſed behind her. Nor did ſhe find in Guiſe any diſpoſition to treat, except upon conditions too inſolent to be accepted even by Henry, in his preſent abject ſtate. No alternative, therefore, except flight, was left; and it might ſpeedily become impracticable, if the Louvre, preſſed in front, and deſtitute of proviſions to hold out againſt the beſiegers, ſhould be inveſted from behind, towards the country.

Negotiations of the queen-dowager, with Guiſe.

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Terror of Henry.

country. After a night of irreſolution, and alarm, the king determined to quit his palace, and effect his eſcape; while the queen-mother returning a ſecond time to the duke of Guiſe, attempted to mollify the terms demanded on the preceding day. Henry's departure was accelerated by the intelligence which he received, that meaſures were taken for ſurrounding him, and that eight thouſand men were already on their march to cut off his retreat, while an attack was to be made upon the palace by the Pariſians. Terrified at the proſpect of remaining a priſoner, he quitted the Louvre; and having mounted on horſeback, attended only by a few gentlemen, he took the road to Chartres, where he arrived on the following day. His courtiers, many of the magiſtrates, and the great officers of the crown, followed him in the utmoſt confuſion [6].

13th May. His flight from Paris.

Such was the ſingular deſtiny of Henry the Third; raiſed to the throne of Poland by election, and to that of France by deſcent; yet, compelled to fly from the capital of each with precipitation; and to quit Paris, as he had done Cracow, near fourteen years earlier, under circumſtances of diſgrace, or of ignominy. His departure

[6] De Thou, vol. x. p. 260—267. Davila, p. 691—698. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 46—49. Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 102—108. L'Etoile, Jour. p. 244—246. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 332—336. D'Aubig. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 72—77.

Of all the contemporary hiſtorians, who have related the circumſtances attending the duke of Guiſe's arrival at Paris, the day of the barricadoes, and the flight of Henry; Davila is the moſt minute, moſt intereſting, and, perhaps, the moſt accurate. He recounts it from high authority, and with a perfect knowledge of the facts. De Thou contains, likewiſe, a number of very curious particulars. That great and virtuous magiſtrate was on the ſpot, an actor in, and a ſpectator of the ſcene. But, Davila ſeems to have known more of the ſecret ſprings, which actuated Henry's conduct.

Chiverny, who, from his high poſt of chancellor, muſt have been acquainted with every tranſaction reſpecting it, is ſhort, and deſtitute of any valuable matter. He aſſerts, that when the king left Paris, his intention was only to have gone to St. Germain; but, reflecting, that he ſhould not be more in ſafety there, than in the capital itſelf, he reſolved on retiring to Chartres. It appears from L'Etoile, that he had not a moment to loſe; and that if he had delayed his flight for two hours longer, it would have become impracticable. We find by the "Chronologie Novennaire," that ſome ſoldiers, placed in the tower of Neſle, near the gate by which the king eſcaped, fired on him, and loaded him with the moſt abuſive language. He ſlept in his boots, at Rambouillet, after having ſtationed guards on every ſide, to prevent ſurprize, or attack.

was

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was not leſs unpleaſing to the duke of Guiſe, who received the information, while he was ſtill negotiating with the queen-mother. Conſcious that he had, by his want of vigilance, allowed his prey to eſcape; and aware of all the conſequences which muſt enſue from ſo irreparable a fault, he exhibited marks of ſurprize, and even of conſternation. But, recovering from his firſt emotions, he prepared to avail himſelf of his victory over the crown. Paris was completely in his poſſeſſion, and he loſt not a moment in ſecuring ſo valuable a prize. Having cauſed the barricadoes to be removed, and reſtored univerſal tranquillity throughout the city; he ſummoned the governor of the Baſtile to ſurrender that fortreſs. Henry had refuſed to entruſt the defence of it to Ornano, one of his braveſt and moſt faithful officers, who had offered, on pain of loſing his head, to maintain it till the laſt extremity. The Baſtile was immediately delivered up; and two days afterwards, the caſtle of Vincennes followed the example. New municipal magiſtrates were elected in the place of thoſe who were attached to the king: Guiſe took poſſeſſion of the arſenal; ſubjected almoſt all the places which command the courſe of the rivers Seine, and Marne; and omitted no precaution to enſure the ſafety, and encreaſe the attachment of the Pariſians [7].

1588. Emotions of Guiſe on that event.

He becomes maſter of the Baſtile.

From the period of Henry's flight, the royal power may be ſaid to have ceaſed, and to have been, in a great meaſure, transferred to "the League." Driven from his capital; abandoned, and betrayed by his miniſters, who perceived his incurable ſupineneſs or incapacity: diveſted of the authority, and greatly diminiſhed even in the external ſplendor annexed to the throne: compelled not only to gratify his implacable enemies with every dignity and office; but, to complete his own humiliation by approving all their outrages: he continued merely to retain the title, without exerciſing the functions

Diſſolution of the royal authority.

[7] De Thou, vol. x. p. 268—270. Davila, p. 699 and 700.

of

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of a king. While Guiſe, elated with his ſucceſs, addreſſed letters to the various cities of the kingdom, and to Henry himſelf, juſtifying the late tranſactions, and applauding their motives for taking up arms; that feeble prince ſcarcely ventured, in his manifeſto to the nation, to expreſs his reſentment for the injuries which he had ſuſtained. Inſtead of aſſembling forces, and attempting to vindicate the inſulted honor of his crown; he permitted Catherine of Medecis, who remained at Paris, to continue the negotiations for peace. Inſenſible to the degraded ſituation in which he ſtood, he even proſecuted his accuſtomed pleaſures, at the time that the adherents of his adverſary rendered themſelves maſters of the moſt important cities of France. Epernon, who had been abſent during the late inſurrection, returning from his government of Normandy, met with a cold reception, and was ordered by Henry to retire to Angouleme. This ſtep, whether the reſult of policy, or ariſing from his change of diſpoſition, was followed by a treaty with Guiſe. The confirmation of all the various acts of rebellion and uſurpation, committed by himſelf and his followers: the addition of new cities to thoſe already ceded to "the League:" the poſt of commander in chief of the forces, with unlimited powers, conferred on the duke himſelf, beſides the poſt of lord ſteward of the houſhold, which he previouſly enjoyed: the recommencement of war with the Hugonots: the excluſion of heretics from the ſucceſſion to the crown: and the convocation of the ſtates general in the enſuing month of October, to ratify all the preceding conceſſions in the name of the nation: theſe were the principal articles of the agreement accepted by the king [s].

Feeble meaſures of Henry.

Treaty concluded with Guiſe.

21ſt July.

4th Auguſt. Guiſe viſits Henry at Chartres.

So humiliating an accommodation was followed by the arrival of Guiſe in perſon at Chartres, where Catherine of Medecis preſented him to her ſon. Henry, notwithſtanding all the recent

[s] De Thou, vol. x. p. 323—326. Davila, p. 700—713. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 725—729.

inſults

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inſults received from him, exhibited every mark of forgiveneſs, and even of affection, towards a man whom he juſtly feared, and whoſe deſtruction, it is probable, that he had already determined. The ſtipulations of the late treaty were fulfilled, though not without manifeſt repugnance; and the duke was inveſted with his new commiſſion, conceived in terms the moſt ample. In order to gratify the cardinal of Bourbon, he was declared, by a ſeparate edict, to be the neareſt prince of the royal blood; and as ſuch, to be entitled to all the privileges or exemptions uſually accorded to the perſon poſſeſſing that high rank. During the courſe of theſe intereſting events, the kingdom was far from enjoying tranquillity. In Poitou, the king of Navarre, who, by the death of his couſin, the prince of Condé, was compelled to aſſume the command, retook the important poſt of Marans, which had fallen into the hands of the royaliſts: while Leſdiguieres having joined his forces with La Valette, brother to Epernon, who acted as lieutenant for the crown in Provence, became by the junction, ſuperior to the troops of "the League." Epernon himſelf, beſieged in the caſtle of Angouleme by the inhabitants of the city, was reduced to the laſt extremity of famine; and only extricated himſelf from the danger by the moſt determined courage [9].

Commotions, and military operations in the provinces.

July.

13th Auguſt.

10th Auguſt.

But, all inferior intereſts or concerns were ſwallowed up in the conſideration of the important ſcene which was about to open at Blois. The duke of Guiſe, notwithſtanding his paſt ſucceſs, regarded the conceſſions of the king as equally incomplete and inſecure, till they were ſolemnly ratified by the aſſembly of the States; and he exerted, by himſelf and his emiſſaries, every endeavour to procure the election of delegates, favorable to his ambitious projects. Henry, on the other hand, had conceived the vain, and chimerical hope of reſuming in that aſſembly, his antient authority. Having gratified the chiefs

Projects of Guiſe, and of Henry.

[9] De Thou, vol. x. p. 328—343, and 352—367. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 230—273.

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of "the League" by a compliance with all their demands, and by the pardon of their conduct in the inſurrection of Paris; he flattered himſelf, that they would reſt ſatisfied with their acquiſitions. Rendered diſtruſtful by his experience of the infidelity of his miniſters, whom he ſuſpected of being either wholly devoted to the queen-mother, under whoſe protection they had riſen; or, of being ſecretly attached to the Guiſes; he made a complete change in the members of his cabinet. A new adminiſtration was formed, on whoſe adherence he believed that he could confide; and Chiverny, the chancellor, diſmiſſed from his employment, was ſucceeded by Montholon, to whom the ſeals were delivered.

Change of miniſters.

Convocation of the States General, at Blois. 16th October.

The convocation of the States, impatiently expected by both parties, was opened by the king in perſon; who harangued the three orders in the caſtle of Blois, expoſed to them in animated colors, the calamities of the nation, and beſought of them to co-operate with him in applying inſtant, and adequate remedies. In order to give an inconteſtable proof of his ſincerity in the late treaty with the duke of Guiſe, and of his intention to execute it with fidelity, he ſwore to its obſervance; cauſed the edict to be received as a fundamental law of the ſtate, and the oath to be taken by every member of the aſſembly. He nevertheleſs, ſoon perceived, that, inſtead of acquiring popularity, by ſuch a meaſure; he had only degraded the throne, and augmented the confidence of his enemies. All the deliberations of the States were directed by them, and ſerved to convince him, that his expectations of aſſiſtance from the repreſentatives of the nation, were deluſive. The clergy, devoted to Guiſe, and peculiarly intereſted in the continuance of war with the Hugonots, conſidered him as their ſole protector: while the delegates compoſing the third eſtate, oppreſſed by the ſeverity of taxes, or corrupted by the money laviſhly expended to purchaſe their ſuffrages; received his commands with implicit obedience. Among the nobles alone, Henry maintained

Influence of Guiſe in the aſſembly.

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a conſiderable degree of influence; but, the crown was too weak to ſupport a conteſt with the other orders, or to render abortive the ſchemes of the powerful faction which preponderated in every reſolution [10]. 1588.

Political, as well as perſonal motives, combined in urging him to adopt ſome vigorous meaſure for his ſafety and extrication. The duke of Savoy, Charles Emanuel, a prince of an aſpiring mind, and ambitious views, encouraged by the troubles of France; privately connected with the Guiſes; and availing himſelf of ſo favorable an occaſion; had attacked and conquered the marquiſate of Saluzzo, ſituated among the Alps, and the laſt remains of the French acquiſitions in Piemont. Henry was deeply ſenſible to the injury; and ſuch was the indignation of the States, that they proceeded inſtantly to declare war upon a prince, who had wantonly violated, without provocation, a long eſtabliſhed peace. The three orders, inſtigated by the duke of Guiſe, had moreover, unanimouſly, and clamorouſly, demanded the royal aſſent to a reſolution, excluding the king of Navarre from his right of ſucceſſion; and though Henry had been able to delay an immediate compliance with their requeſt, yet, it was evident that he muſt eventually ſanction the decree. From every quarter he received information of the duke's treaſonable deſigns, which had for their avowed object, his impriſonment, and conſequent depoſition. Marſhal d'Aumont, one of the few perſons ſincerely attached to his honor and intereſts, had warned him, that not a moment was to be loſt, as the States were already diſpoſed to inſiſt on the nomination of the duke to the office of conſtable of France; the powers annexed to which, would render him equally independant of, and formidable to, the crown.

November. Capture of Saluzzo, by the duke of Savoy.

Demands of the States.

As if theſe public inducements were not ſufficiently powerful to propel the indolence of the king, private inſults and mortifications the moſt humili-

Motives to impel the king to adopt vigorous reſolutions.

[10] Davila, p. 719—726. De Thou, vol. x. p. 368—397.

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humiliating, were added. Henry having deſired to except the city of Orleans from the number of places ceded by him to "the League," his wiſh was not only refuſed; but, menaces were thrown out, if he ſhould preſume to inſiſt on the propoſition. The ducheſs of Montpenſier publickly ſhewed the golden ſciſſars which ſhe wore at her girdle; and owned, that they were deſtined to give the tonſure to a king, whom ſhe pronounced unworthy longer to wear the crown. Even from the adherents of the family of Guiſe, and, as it was generally believed, from the duke of Mayenne himſelf, whoſe moderate temper rendered him averſe to his brother's ambitious views; Henry had received advice, that a deſperate meaſure was on the point of being taken againſt his dignity and liberty, if not againſt his life".

Henry determines on cauſing Guiſe to be put to death.

Rouſed by ſo many concurring teſtimonies, that irreſolute prince, driven beyond the bounds of patience, and compelled to have recourſe to the moſt violent remedies, in order to preſerve the remains of his authority; determined on immediate vengeance. Unable to arreſt ſo powerful a criminal, or to condemn him by the cuſtomary forms of juſtice, he was neceſſitated to recur to aſſaſſination; and having embraced the reſolution, it was not difficult to find inſtruments for the purpoſe. His terrors of "the League" had induced him to form a body guard, compoſed principally of Gaſcon gentlemen, choſen by Epernon; poor, faithful, and capable of any enterprize. They were forty-five in number, and commanded by Lognac, whoſe devotion was unqueſtionable. Having ſelected from among them, nine, of whoſe intrepidity he had the higheſt opinion, Henry diſtributed the poniards deſtined for the act, with his own hands; ſtationed them in the apartment adjoining to his cabinet; and recommended to them his honor, and his crown.

He ſelects the inſtruments of his vengeance.

Audacity of Guiſe.

Notwithſtanding the precautions taken to conceal the deſign, indirect and ambiguous notifications of it were tranſmitted to the duke

[11] Davila, p. 726—739. De Thou, vol. x. p. 422—449. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 95—103.

of

of Guiſe, from various quarters. But, naturally incapable of fear, and audacious, even to temerity: too far advanced, either to retreat, or to fly, without ſacrificing his projects and his adherents: relying on the timidity or indeciſion of Henry, whom he deſpiſed; and diſſuaded by the archbiſhop of Lyons, one of his moſt confidential friends, from abandoning his plans at the moment of their completion; he diſregarded all admonitions. The king having commanded his attendance alone, in order, as he pretended, to conſult him on ſome affairs of a private nature; the duke, unaccompanied by his ordinary attendants, quitted the chamber in which the council was aſſembled. At the inſtant, when he entered the adjoining apartment, and while he was in the act of lifting up the tapeſtry which covered the door of the cabinet where Henry ſtood; the gentlemen, appointed to aſſaſſinate him, attacked him on every ſide. Overpowered by numbers, and incapable of making a long defence, he ſoon fell, and expired almoſt without uttering a ſingle word [12].

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His aſſaſſination. 23d December.

Such

[12] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 103—109. L'Etoile, p. 257—259. De Thou, vol. x. p. 460—470, and p. 480. Davila, p. 741—747. Chiverny, vol. i. p. 121—123.

Every particular of this intereſting cataſtrophé is to be found in Davila, L'Etoile, De Thou, and the "Chronologie Novenaire." They in general, agree with each other, in the leading facts. It cannot be queſtioned, that the duke of Guiſe received repeated information of Henry's intention to aſſaſſinate him; nor does it ſeem that he altogether diſbelieved or deſpiſed the admonitions: but, he could no longer retreat, without diſgrace and ruin. L'Etoile ſays, that he received no leſs than nine billets on the morning of his death, to warn him of his fate; and, that he diſregarded them all. He adds, that after his aſſaſſination, Henry, coming out of his cloſet, and regarding the dead body of his enemy, kicked it on the face; exclaiming, "Mon "Dieu! qu'il eſt grand! Il paroit encore plus grand, mort, que vivant." But, Davila, far better informed, expreſsly ſays, that "the king, content with knowing that "the duke was dead, would not even look "upon the corpſe;" and, de Thou confirms it, by declaring, that, "ſo ſoon as "Guiſe's death was announced, Henry ordered the carpet upon which he fell, to be "laid over him, and came out of his cloſet." This conduct is much more analogous to the general character of the king, who was not cruel, nor vindictive. The laſt neceſſity alone had impelled him to anticipate the intentions of his enemies, which were levelled againſt his crown and liberty.

If it be true, as d'Aubigné aſſerts, that the door which communicated from the chamber in which Guiſe was killed, to the king's cloſet, was walled up, in order to prevent the poſſibility of his entering it; no circumſtance can convey a ſtronger idea of the terror, inſpired by him into Henry. The bodies of the duke, and of the cardinal his brother,

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Character.

Such was the fatal end of a man, who, in other times, and conducted by other principles, might have been equally the ſupport, and the ornament of the throne. Nature had laviſhed on him many of the rareſt and greateſt endowments; peculiarly thoſe which are calculated to obtain, and to preſerve an empire over mankind. In generoſity, affability, and inſinuation, he exceeded any of his contemporaries. His manners were popular and gracious; yet, dignified and elevated. Profuſe of promiſes, of careſſes, and of money, he acquired adherents in every claſs of ſociety. His talents for war had been fully diſplayed; and his ſucceſs in the late campaign againſt the Germans, by raiſing him to the pinnacle of public favor, prepared the way to his ruin. Patient of hunger, thirſt, and every hardſhip, he was not leſs idolized by the ſoldiery, than by the people; and his incredible activity enabled him, without effort, or fatigue, to be preſent at, and perſonally to direct, every operation of the field, or of the cabinet. So many ſublime qualities were, notwithſtanding, obſcured by an inſatiable ambition, and ſullied by a diſregard to his promiſes, and a contempt of faith in all his tranſactions.

Arreſt of the cardinal of Guiſe.

At the ſame inſtant when the duke of Guiſe was aſſaſſinated, his brother, the cardinal, together with the archbiſhop of Lyons, were arreſted in the council chamber. Henry, neither ſanguinary, nor vindictive from natural character, was inclined to have ſpared the cardinal: but, the exhortations of thoſe who ſurrounded him; the violent and implacable enmity, expreſſed by that prelate; and the menaces which even his preſent ſituation could not induce him to refrain from uttering; prevailed on the king to give orders for his execution. Four

His death.

ſoldiers, to whom the charge was committed, diſpatched him with

ther, were let down by ropes from the caſtle, on the night of the 24th of December, into the court yard; and there conſumed by quick-lime, in order to prevent any relics of them from being preſerved. By the ſeizure of Pelicart, ſecretary to the duke of Guiſe, and from the papers and letters in his poſſeſſion, it was clearly proved, that a treaſonable correſpondence was carried on between Guiſe and Philip the Second, king of Spain. The ſums, aſſerted to have been remitted from Philip, during the ten years preceding 1588, did not fall ſhort of two hundred thouſand pounds ſterling, as De Thou poſitively declares.

their

their halberts: he met his fate with undaunted intrepidity. Satisfied with having ſacrificed the two brothers, Henry did not ſhed any other blood; and he inſtantly granted the life of the archbiſhop of Lyons, to the entreaties of his nephew. The ducheſs of Nemours, mother to the duke and cardinal of Guiſe; the young prince of Joinville, ſon to the duke; together with the cardinal of Bourbon, who had been ſo long the inſtrument of "the League;" and the duke of Elbeuf, another prince of the family of Lorrain, were committed to the caſtle of Amboiſe. Many of the inferior agents, or adherents of the Guiſes, were, likewiſe, ſeized; but, the injudicious, and ill-timed lenity of the king, ſoon reſtored them to freedom; and they abuſed it, by immediately proceeding to every act of violence againſt the crown. The duke of Mayenne, abſent at Lyons, having received intelligence of the death of his brothers; and apprized, that, if he loſt a moment, he would be likewiſe arreſted; precipitately left the city, and fled to Dijon, the capital of his government of Burgundy [13].

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1588. 24th December. Impriſonment of various perſons.

Eſcape of Mayenne.

[13] Davila, p. 747—755. De Thou, vol. x. p. 471—479. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 151—154.

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Inactivity of the king, after the death of the Guiſes.—Emotions excited by that event, at Paris.—Death of Catherine of Medecis.—Rebellion.—Violent acts committed by the Pariſians.—Duke of Mayenne, conſtituted chief of the League.—Revolt of the principal cities of France.—Deſperate ſituation of Henry.—Conduct of the king of Navarre.—Truce between him and Henry.—Excommunication of the king.—Interview of Pleſſiz les Tours.—Attack of Tours, by Mayenne.—Operations of the war.—Vigorous exertions of the king.—He marches to Paris.—Critical poſition of the affairs of the League.—Aſſaſſination of Henry.—His death.—Character.—General Reflexions.

CHAP. VIII.

1589. Conſternation, excited by the late events.

THE conſternation, excited by the death of the Guiſes, not only at Blois, but, throughout the kingdom, was ſuch, that if Henry had availed himſelf of it without delay, and had acted with vigor, it is probable that no fatal conſequences might have reſulted, either to himſelf, or to his ſubjects. Notwithſtanding the contempt into which his perſon and authority were fallen, the ſpirit of loyalty and obedience was not entirely extinct. The capital, and the provinces, were alike ſuſpended, on receiving the intelligence, and waited in expectation of the events, by which ſo unexpected a blow would probably be followed. Orleans might have been ſaved by promptitude and diſpatch; marſhal d'Aumont having found means to enter the caſtle, which held out for the crown againſt the inhabitants of the city. In Poitou, the duke of Nevers commanded a conſiderable army againſt the Proteſtants, and could have been recalled without difficulty. Sancy, who had recently been embaſſador to the Swiſs cantons,

cantons, urged the neceſſity of a levy of troops from that country, and offered to conduct them in perſon; nor was it poſſible for the adherents of "the League," unprepared, and ſcattered over the kingdom, to act with energy againſt their ſovereign, when at the head of a formidable army, and followed by a numerous nobility. CHAP. VIII. 1589.

But, all theſe advantages were rendered unavailing, by the inactivity and ſupineneſs of Henry. The emotions of reſentment, which had excited him to revenge the inſults offered to his dignity, having ſubſided, he relapſed into his former apathy and ſecurity. He had taken no meaſures for ſupporting the late violent act of ſeverity; and he flattered himſelf, that the projects of the duke of Guiſe would be extinguiſhed by his death. Inſtead of putting himſelf inſtantly on horſeback, and marching his forces againſt Orleans and Paris, he appeared to be inſenſible to the ſituation of thoſe cities; and he dreaded more the Papal excommunication for the murder of the cardinal of Guiſe, than the indignation of the people of France. His firſt attention was directed to deprecate the anger of the holy ſee; and after uſing every effort to mollify the legate, he diſpatched the biſhop of Mans, as his embaſſador to Rome, in order to appeaſe the cenſures with which he was menaced from Sixtus the Fifth [a]. Inaction of Henry.

A conduct ſo indolent and puſillanimous, was attended with the worſt effects. The caſtle of Orleans, deſtitute of the neceſſary garriſon, ſurrendered to the beſiegers; and that important city, ſituated on the Loire, in the center of the kingdom, was loſt by Henry's neglect. The royal army under the duke of Nevers, infected with the general ſpirit of ſedition and revolt, diſbanded, and joined the enemy: while, the duke of Mayenne, who ſeemed irreſolute and uncertain of the part which he ſhould act, encouraged by the king's inaction, determined to revenge the death of his brothers. But, it was in the capital, that the moſt alarming events took place, on the 1589. Pernicious effects reſulting from it. Emotions of the Pariſians, on the duke of Guiſe's death.

[a] Davila, p. 777. De Thou, vol. x. p. 483—485.

CHAP. VIII. 1589.

arrival of the intelligence that the popular leaders had been aſſaſſinated. Apprehenſive that their execution was only a preludé to greater diſplays of authority, and that Henry would ſoon appear in perſon to reſume his prerogatives, and to puniſh the rebels who had inſulted his lenity; the people betrayed ſcarcely any other emotions, except thoſe of grief. Even the clergy, who had manifeſted the warmeſt devotion to the houſe of Guiſe, reſtrained their ſorrow, or contented themſelves with deploring the tragical end of two princes, ſo illuſtrious for their public ſervices and virtues. The parliament of Paris, compoſed of perſons, venerable from their age, character and judicial functions; was not inclined to adopt ſentiments of a nature hoſtile to the repoſe of their country. Among the opulent claſſes of citizens in the metropolis, there was every diſpoſition to aid and ſupport the crown, if they had in turn, received from it, the natural and juſt protection. But, when, inſtead of hearing that Henry was on his march to reſtore order, they learned that he remained at Blois in a ſtate of indolent repoſe; and when they beheld the example of Orleans, which ventured to reſiſt with impunity, they gave full ſcope to their rage and violence. Having aſſembled tumultuouſly in the town-hall, they conferred the government of Paris on the duke of Aumale; came to a determination of ſending immediate ſuccours to the inhabitants of Orleans; and put the city into a ſtate of defence. The fermentation was ſuſtained by the popular preachers, who, enraged at the murder of the cardinal of Guiſe, confounded his puniſhment with the intereſts of the Catholic religion, of which they declared him the martyr; and branded their ſovereign with the moſt opprobrious epithets [2].

Fermentation and revolt in the capital.

Death of Catherine of Medecis.

While theſe ſymptoms of rebellion diſplayed themſelves in Paris, an event took place at Blois, which, however loſt in the turbulent and calamitous ſcenes preſented on every ſide, at this period of Henry's

[2] De Thou, vol. x. p. 485—490. Davila, p. 760—762.

reign, muſt forcibly attract the notice of the hiſtorian. Catherine of Medecis, at ſeventy years of age, during the laſt thirty of which ſhe had directed, in a greater, or leſſer degree, the affairs of France, expired, after an illneſs of a few days. At the time of the duke of Guiſe's aſſaſſination, ſhe was indiſpoſed with the gout; and her emotions on receiving information of an event, to which ſhe might be ſaid, in ſome meaſure, to have contributed by the protection of the Guiſes, accelerated the progreſs of her diſorder. Her judgment, ripened by experience, enabled her to ſee, and to apprize the king, who, with marks of exultation, informed her of the duke's death, that only vigor and expedition could extricate him from the commotions, with which it muſt neceſſarily be followed. Her malady redoubled, in conſequence of the ſevere reproaches made her by the cardinal of Bourbon, on her ſuppoſed participation in the violent meaſures adopted by her ſon; and the agitations of her mind aiding the attacks of diſeaſe, ſhe ſurvived only a ſhort time. Few women have poſſeſſed a more exalted capacity, or have acted ſo diſtinguiſhed a part on the theatre of the world. The ſtrength of her genius, and the acuteneſs of her talents, enabled her to acquire, and to retain an aſcendant over her two ſons, Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, after their confidence in her was totally extinct. Of a maſculine ambition, ſhe deſpiſed the ordinary occupations and amuſements of her ſex, and was only intent upon more ſolid objects. Magnificent, liberal, affable, and capable of the cloſeſt application, ſhe was never overcome by the magnitude, nor diſtracted by the multiplicity of public affairs. Prodigal of human blood; faithleſs to her engagements; and regardleſs of the means by which ſhe attained her ends; ſhe was deſtitute of principles of virtue. Continually employed in exciting the diſſentions of the kingdom, in order to render her interference neceſſary for their ſuppreſſion; ſhe maintained her influence, at the expence of the national tranquillity and felicity. Mortified to behold her authority in a great meaſure ſubverted, by the favor to which Joyeuſe and

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1589. 5th January.

Character of that princeſs.

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Support given by her to the League.

Epernon had attained; ſhe had recourſe to the Guiſes, in order to balance and preponderate the credit of Henry's minions. With that view, ſhe facilitated, or ſupported the meaſures of "the League:" but, her ability was unequal to extinguiſh the conflagration which ſhe had kindled; and ſhe ſaw before her death the fatal effects of her inordinate thirſt of power. Oppreſſed at once by age and diſeaſe; reproached by thoſe whom ſhe had unintentionally precipitated on ruin; and no longer truſted by Henry himſelf; having outlived her influence, and involved her ſon, as well as the monarchy of France, in almoſt inextricable calamities; ſhe might be eſteemed fortunate in not ſurviving to witneſs the complete extinction of the houſe of Valois, and the transfer of the crown to the family of Bourbon, which ſhe had always hated and perſecuted [3].

Diſmiſſion of the States General.

The king performed her funeral with all the ſolemnity and magnificence, which the diſtreſſed ſituation of his affairs and finances would permit. Inattentive to, and unaffected by the diſtracted condition of the kingdom, he continued at Blois, occupied in cloſing and finally

16th January.

diſmiſſing the States. He executed it with the ſame tranquillity and complacency, which he would have exhibited in a time of profound repoſe; although every hour convinced him of the neceſſity of exerting his utmoſt efforts, to prevent the deſtruction impending over his crown and life. Previous to the diſſolution of the aſſembly, he adminiſtered anew the oath, by which he bound himſelf never to tolerate any religion, except the Catholic; but, this proof of his zeal, only ſerved to manifeſt his weakneſs, and to encourage his enemies. Mendoza, the Spaniſh embaſſador, had already taken his departure, and had repaired to Paris, in which city was concentered all

Inſurrection at Paris.

the violence of "the League." Encouraged by Henry's feeble and dilatory proceedings, the inhabitants no longer obſerved any meaſures of reſpect towards him; and the ſpirit of revolt pervading all the

[3] Davila, p. 755—757. De Thou, vol. x. p. 500—503. L'Etoile, p. 261—263. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 124—133.

claſſes

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claſſes of ſociety, the remaining barriers which oppoſed their progreſs, were totally overthrown. The college of the Sorbonne, whoſe decrees in theology were regarded in that age as ſacred, when conſulted by the people, in the names of the municipal magiſtrates; ſolemnly determined, that the nation was freed from the oath of fidelity, and that arms might conſcientiouſly be taken up againſt Henry, for the defence of religion. Such was the blind and furious attachment of the multitude to the duke and cardinal of Guiſe, that they ſaw in thoſe princes only their devotion to the Catholic faith, and were inſenſible to the acts of treaſon and rebellion, by which they had merited and provoked their fate. From ſimilar perverſion of mind, a prince, whoſe principal crime conſiſted in his inſurmountable indolence, and who had with difficulty been rouſed to a ſingle act of vengeance, neceſſary for his own preſervation; was ſtigmatized by his ſubjects, with the imputation of a ſanguinary tyrant, delighting in the effuſion of human blood.

1589. Decree of the college of the Sorbonne.

Powerful as the decree of the Sorbonne had been, in exciting the populace to throw off ſubjection to the government, it would have been ineffectual to produce their complete emancipation from all reſtraint, while the parliament of Paris continued to exerciſe its functions, and to retain its authority. It became, therefore, requiſite to diſſolve an aſſembly, whoſe preſence and deliberations tended to keep alive a ſenſe of duty and loyalty. Buſſy le Clerc, a man whoſe audacity fitted him for the commiſſion, undertook to arreſt, and to conduct the refractory members to priſon. Having ſurrounded the hall in which the parliament was met, and occupi d all the avenues with his adherents; he entered, armed, into the great chamber, at the preciſe time when they were about to nominate deputies to wait upon the king at Blois. He inſtantly began to read the liſt of the obnoxious and proſcribed members, among whom were the two preſidents; when he was interrupted by the unanimous voice of the whole body, who declared their determination to follow their chiefs.

Seizure, and impriſonment of the parliament.

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chiefs. They were conducted through the ſtreets of the capital, accompanied by the lamentations and tears of the virtuous, or moderate part of the citizens; and were lodged in the Baſtile. A new parliament, compoſed of individuals more ſubſervient, was ſpeedily conſtituted by the inſurgents; who proceeded to adminiſter a ſolemn oath, in the name of the princes, cities, and ſtates of France, binding them to maintain the union, and to purſue the vengeance of the late aſſaſſinations. To inflame the paſſions of the people, a ſpectacle calculated to awaken their pity, was likewiſe exhibited; that of the ducheſs of Guiſe, widow of the late duke, who, dreſſed in the deepeſt mourning, and accompanied by a train of weeping friends or relatives, preſented at the bar of the parliament, a petition, praying for redreſs againſt the authors of her huſband's death[4].

They are conducted to the Baſtile.

31ſt January.

Theſe important changes preceded the arrival of the duke of Mayenne, who remained, during a conſiderable time after his flight to Dijon, in a ſtate of indeciſion as to his future conduct. The natural moderation of his temper, added to the diſapprobation which he had felt, and expreſſed, at his brother's ambitious and criminal attempts, inclined him to liſten to the amicable propoſitions made him by Henry. But, the exhortations of his ſiſter, the ducheſs of Montpenſier; the invitation of the Pariſians; the ſucceſsful revolt of the city of Orleans; and the defenceleſs inactivity in which the king remained, at the moment which was to decide upon his greateſt intereſts: theſe conſiderations ſurmounted the reluctance of Mayenne. Quitting Burgundy, he repaired therefore, to Orleans; was received into the city of Chartres, which declared for "the League;" and, after confirming the adherence of his partizans, he arrived in the metropolis, amidſt the acclamations of the inhabitants.

Indeciſion of the duke of Mayenne.

His arrival at Paris.

15th February.

His preſence diffuſed univerſal joy, and was followed by events which gave the laſt blow to the expiring influence or authority of the

[4] De Thou, vol. x. p. 511—520. Davila, p. 760—765. L'Etoile, p. 264—271. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 117—121. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 364—367.

crown.

crown. The duke immediately conſtituted a council of the Union, compoſed of forty members, ſelected from among the clergy, nobility, magiſtrates, and citizens, for the ſupreme adminiſtration of all affairs; the ſeparate juriſdiction of Paris being ſtill veſted in the council of ſixteen. Obedience to them was enjoined, on pain of death; and from their hands, he ſoon afterwards received the inveſtiture of his new office, denominated "Lieutenant-general "of the Royal State and Crown of France." Its duration was limited to the convocation of the States General, at Paris, in the following month of July; and the functions, annexed to it, were preciſely thoſe naturally and legitimately veſted in the ſovereign, whoſe perſon he was deſigned to repreſent. The duke ſwore, at the ceremony of his induction, to maintain inviolate the purity of the Catholic faith, the privileges of the nobility and clergy, and the laws of the kingdom. He likewiſe promiſed, in order to attach the people, a diminution of the taxes, and protection from all violence or oppreſſion. This public act by which Henry was virtually depoſed, aided by the inflammatory diſcourſes of the Monks and preachers, carried the outrages of the Pariſians to the laſt extremity. The populace, animated to a degree of frenzy, liſtened with implicit credulity to all the abſurd and monſtrous fictions, invented to defame and traduce the king. In addition to the crimes of perfidy and aſſaſſination, were added the accuſations of magic, impiety, and every profanation. He was no longer known by any denomination except that of Henry of Valois; and it was ſolemnly propoſed, after his depoſition from the royal dignity, to impriſon him during the remainder of his life in the convent of the Hiéronimites, in the wood of Vincennes, there to expiate his paſt offences by penitence and prayer[5].

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1589. 18th February.

4th March. He is conſtituted lieutenant-general of the crown.

Fury of the Pariſians.

[5] De Thou, vol. x. p. 525—529. Davila, p. 772—775.

The

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Revolt of the kingdom.

The powerful example of the metropolis, operated with incredible force upon the other cities of the kingdom; and the greater number of them openly embraced the party of the duke of Mayenne. From the northern frontier of Picardy, to the gates of Marſeilles, and the ſhore of the Mediterranean, ſcarcely a place of any ſtrength, or importance remained firm in its allegiance to the crown. Amiens, and Abbeville, which, as well from their magnitude, as from their poſition on the river Somme, were of the firſt conſequence, joined "the League." Laon imitated their conduct; and Melun, the only town in the vicinity of Paris, which had refuſed to ſubmit, was loſt for want of aſſiſtance. Rouen, together with the whole of Upper Normandy, expelled the royal troops, and governors. The contagion ſpread with irreſiſtible rapidity. Chalons on the Marne, was the only city of Champagne, which adhered to Henry; and Burgundy was completely in the intereſts of the duke of Mayenne. Even the important and commercial city of Lyons could not be retained in its duty, by the exertions of Ornano; and Provence exhibited ſimilar proofs of diſaffection. The inhabitants of Toulouſe, after maſſacring, with circumſtances of uncommon ferocity, their firſt magiſtrates, renounced ſubjection to the king; and Narbonne followed the example. In the central and interior provinces, the defection was not leſs general. La Chatre, governor of Berri, induced the city of Bourges to revolt; and Mans was loſt, by the perfidy of Bois-Dauphin, one of the chiefs arreſted by Henry after the aſſaſſination of the duke of Guiſe, and whom he had afterwards imprudently releaſed upon his parole. Clermont alone, of all the cities in Auvergne, refuſed to throw off its allegiance. But, the defection of the duke of Mercœur more deeply affected the king, as in addition to the government of Brittany, he ſtood in the neareſt degree of connexion to the crown, by Henry's marriage with his ſiſter, Louiſa of Vaudemont. Among ſo many calamities, and amidſt ſo univerſal a revolt, Matignon retained Bourdeaux in its obedience, though not without difficulty.

Rouen.

Lyons.

Toulouſe.

Brittany.

ficulty. In Guienne, Languedoc, and Dauphiné, from the numbers and predominance of the Hugonots, "the League" had little power, and few adherents. The courſe of the Loire from the gates of Orleans, to thoſe of Nantes, and the paſſages of that important river, were, likewiſe, principally occupied by the royaliſts; and Henry was ſtill nominally obeyed in Tours, Saumur, and Angers[6]. CHAP. VIII. 1589.

Conduct of Sixtus the Fifth, towards the king.

Nor was the ſituation of that prince's affairs in the court of Rome, more favorable than the internal aſpect of France. Sixtus the Fifth, naturally arrogant and iraſcible; inclined to profit of the anarchy of the kingdom, in order to extend the power and pretenſions of the Holy See; and warmly ſolicited by the Spaniſh faction, who ſupported the duke of Mayenne; pertinaciouſly refuſed to grant the king abſolution for the aſſaſſinations, committed by his orders. It was in vain, that he attempted by ſubmiſſions and proteſtations of devotion, to mollify the pontiff; who demanded, previous to his forgiveneſs, that the cardinal of Bourbon, and the archbiſhop of Lyons ſhould be ſet at liberty, and even transferred before the Papal tribunal at Rome. Sixtus, far from relaxing in his requiſitions, menaced the king with excommunication, and appeared to have embraced with ardor the intereſts of his enemies; nor could the interceſſion of the embaſſadors of Venice and Tuſcany prevail on him to adopt a conduct, more becoming the common father of the Chriſtian world[7].

Deplorable condition of Henry.

Oppreſſed by foreign, and domeſtic calamities, the king's ſituation became every day more critical and deſperate. "The League" was in poſſeſſion of almoſt all his dominions; while the Hugonots, relieved from the preſſure of the royal forces under the duke of Nevers, advanced rapidly towards the Loire, and threatened to encloſe him between two hoſtile armies. The exchequer was empty; the finances drained, or alienated; and he poſſeſſed no reſources to

[6] De Thou, vol. x. p. 551—575. Davila, p. 765—768. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 139—148.
[7] Davila, p. 770—772. De Thou, vol. x. p. 530—550.

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ſupply the deficiency. His troops were neither numerous, nor could he rely on their attachment, in a moment of general deſertion. The few places which ſtill adhered to him, were ſhaken, and ready to revolt. Even his governors and commanders whom he moſt truſted, opened their gates to the enemy, or compelled him to purchaſe their precarious fidelity, by preſents and rewards. Spain and Savoy were unqueſtionably hoſtile; and he dreaded to aſk, or to receive aſſiſtance from Elizabeth, queen of England, the protectreſs of hereſy. Mayenne, maſter of the capital, and at the head of a formidable military force, prepared to commence active war; nor could the conteſt be either long, or dubious. It was already agitated in his council, to quit Blois, and to tranſport the court to Moulins, capital of the Bourbonnois. The condition of Charles the Seventh was not more deplorable, when the maid of Orleans appeared, and re-eſtabliſhed the monarchy of France. Under theſe circumſtances, the king, at length, iſſued an edict, in which, after juſtifying the late acts of ſeverity againſt the Guiſes, as equally neceſſary and provoked, he commanded the rebels to return to their duty, on pain of treaſon. In order to give ſome efficacy to the proclamation, he publiſhed a ſecond edict, transferring the parliament of Paris to Tours; in which latter city he fixed his reſidence, as more ſecure from inſult than Blois. His preſence prevented the inhabitants from following the general example; and Angers, which had already taken up arms againſt him, was kept in ſubjection by the firmneſs of Picheri, who commanded in the caſtle. Henry, having, on payment of a conſiderable ſum, obtained from le Guaſt, the governor of Amboiſe, the delivery of the priſoners confided to his care, removed them to different priſons. The cardinal of Bourbon was confined at Chinon: the duke of Elbeuf was tranſferred to Loches; and the young duke of Guiſe was detained in the caſtle of Tours [a].

Edict iſſued by him.

5th March.

Transfer of the priſoners from Amboiſe.

[a] De Thou, vol. x. p. 575—583. Davila, p. 787 and 788.

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Notwithſtanding theſe exertions of vigor, aided by ſome advantages which the count of Soiſſons obtained over the troops of "the League," no ſolid hopes of ſucceſs could be entertained, unleſs an accommodation took place with the king of Navarre. That event began already to be regarded as probable, if not imminent; and neceſſity dictated the meaſure. The count of Soiſſons, whoſe deſcent from the blood royal, rendered him deeply intereſted in effecting the reconciliation, and whoſe attachment to the Catholic religion was unqueſtionable; urged its expediency. Even the moſt bigotted ſervants of Henry, conſcious of the danger which approached, and aware of Mayenne's ſuperiority; admitted, that no other mode of extrication could be deviſed. The conduct of the king of Navarre himſelf, above all, tended to facilitate a re-union. As his troops advanced through Poitou, and made themſelves ſucceſſively maſters of various places which ſurrendered, he prevented any inſult, or injury, from being offered to the Catholics; reſpected their civil and eccleſiaſtical rights; and only reſtored to the Proteſtants the freedom of religious worſhip, previouſly enjoyed by the edicts of toleration which Henry had repeatedly iſſued. In addition to ſo beneficent and moderate a treatment of his enemies, he publiſhed a manifeſto, dated at Chatelheraud in Poitou, calculated to awaken the loyalty, while it conciliated the eſteem and affection of every man, who retained any ſentiments of patriotiſm, or public virtue. After deploring the calamities of their common country, and reprobating the traitors, who, under the maſk of religion, had thrown off all ſubjection to their ſovereign; he declared perpetual war and irreconcilable enmity with the adherents of the League. He concluded by beſeeching of Henry to receive him again into favor; and proteſted in terms the moſt ſolemn, that whatever places ſhould ſubmit themſelves either to the king, or to himſelf, he would maintain the inhabit-

Neceſſity of an accommodation with the king of Navarre.

Enlarged policy, and conduct of that prince.

4th March.

His manifeſto.

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ants in the undiſturbed enjoyment of all their privileges; peculiarly, in liberty of conſcience [9].

1589. Negotiation between the two kings.

So many concurring inducements, at length, overcame the king's repugnance; and he conſented to open a negotiation. It was facilitated, and accelerated by the interpoſition of Diana, counteſs of Angouleme, natural daughter of Henry the Second. The conditions were ſpeedily adjuſted; the king of Navarre demanding only a place on the Loire, for the ſecurity of his retreat; and conſenting to join the royal army with his own forces, amounting to two thouſand foot, and twelve hundred cavalry. On theſe ſtipulations, a truce was concluded for one year, between the two princes; and after ſome delays, Saumur, one of the moſt eligible and commodious paſſages on the Loire, was ceded to the king of Navarre. Yet, at the moment of ſigning a treaty ſo advantageous to himſelf, Henry, actuated by his terrors of the Papal indignation, by his deteſtation of the Hugonots, and by his anxiety to obtain peace, on any conditions; commenced a negotiation with Mayenne. He even authorized the legate to offer the duke terms the moſt ſatisfactory, together with ample gratifications for all the princes of Lorrain, and the heads of the League. But, Mayenne, elated by the flattering aſpect of his affairs; and ſecure of the protection of Rome; rejected with diſdain, all propoſals of accommodation. He accompanied the refuſal, with expreſſions of contempt and averſion for Henry, whom he no longer treated, or affected to regard as king of France. Irritated at ſo inſulting a treatment, and conſcious that no hopes were to be entertained of reconciliation with his enemies; Henry conſented to the publication of the truce between him and the king of Navarre. It had been preceded by a ſimilar ſuſpenſion of hoſtilities, between Ornano, and Leſdiguieres, in Dauphiné, as chiefs of the Catholic and Hugonot armies [10].

3d April.

Treaty concluded.

Treatment of Henry, by Mayenne.

Truce.

[9] De Thou, vol. x. p. 584—588. Davila, p. 785. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 159—165.

[10] De Thou, vol. x. p. 589—593. Davila, p. 786—790. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 379—381. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 174—181.

The

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The intelligence of a treaty with the Proteſtants, and the conſequent reconciliation between the kings of France and Navarre, when it became known at Paris, carried the rage of its inhabitants to the utmoſt height. Libels, calumnies, and every kind of outrage, were circulated, or permitted, by which a furious and miſguided populace could expreſs their impotent reſentment: while the ducheſs of Montpenſier ſuſtained their courage, by falſe, or exaggerated accounts of pretended victories over the royal forces. But, Henry was far leſs ſenſible to theſe demonſtrations of the enmity of his own ſubjects, than to the effects of the Papal cenſures. Sixtus, convinced that the affairs of the crown were deſperate; incenſed at the king's refuſal to liberate the two priſoners, for whoſe freedom he had ſolicited; and yielding to the importunities of Mayenne's agents; iſſued a monitory, enjoining Henry to ſet at liberty, in ten days, the cardinal of Bourbon, and the archbiſhop of Lyons. On failure of obedience, the pope declared him excommunicated, as well as all his adherents; and cited him to appear in perſon, or by his repreſentative, before the tribunal of the Holy See, within the ſpace of two months. The Italian powers, particularly Ferdinand, great duke of Tuſcany, and the republic of Venice, were deeply ſenſible to ſo inſolent a diſplay of the pontifical authority; and warmly exhorted the king to reſent and puniſh the affront. Ferdinand, in addition to this generous and high-ſpirited advice, aſſiſted him with a very conſiderable loan, which enabled him to make new exertions, and to ſet on foot levies, within, and without his dominions. On the contrary, Sixtus, content with having anathematized him at the ſuggeſtion of the League, refuſed to open the treaſury of St. Peter, or to aid Mayenne with the ſmalleſt pecuniary contribution [11].

Violence of the Pariſians.

Monitory, iſſued by Sixtus. 24th May.

The perſonal interview between the two monarchs, which had been too long delayed by the ſcruples, or apprehenſions of Henry, took

Interview of Pleſſiz les Tours.

[11] Davila, p. 810 and 811. De Thou, vol. x. p. 594—600, and 603—614.

place

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place at length, in the park of the caſtle of Pleſſiz, near the city of Tours, amidſt an incredible aſſemblage of people, who rent the air with acclamations. The king of Navarre, after rejecting the cautious and timid advice of thoſe, who oppoſed his truſting to the honor of Henry; quitted his army, and advanced to throw himſelf at his ſovereign's feet. He was received by that prince, as he merited, with demonſtrations of extraordinary regard and affection. They embraced, exhibited marks of the moſt cordial reconciliation, and proceeded to concert meaſures for the vigorous proſecution of the war. The king of Navarre completed his firſt impreſſion, by returning, accompanied only with a ſingle page, on the following morning, in order to prove his unbounded confidence in Henry's good faith and ſincerity [12].

1589. 30th April.

Exertions of Henry.

Rouſed from his habitual indolence, by ſo many incentives to action, the king diſpatched Sancy to levy ten thouſand infantry among the Swiſs Cantons; and Schomberg, on a ſimilar commiſſion, into the empire, to raiſe a body of German cavalry. The war had already been commenced in Normandy, where the duke of Montpenſier, at the head of the royal forces, obtained a deciſive victory over the Gautiers; a community of peaſants, who having been driven by oppreſſion, to take up arms, had been ſeduced to join the party of the League. Surrounded, and repeatedly attacked, they were either put to the ſword, or compelled to ſurrender at diſcretion. A prodigious carnage was made among them; and the ſurvivors gladly accepted their lives, on condition of returning to their original occupation. An event ſo fortunate, at the commencement of hoſtilities, inſpired the royaliſts with courage; and Henry's army was augmented by the arrival of the duke of Epernon, who, at this critical period, brought him a ſupply of twelve hundred troops from Guienne. The king of Navarre, having returned to his camp, was,

Defeat of the Gautiers.

22d April.

[12] De Thou, vol. x. p. 618—622. Davila, p. 800. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 185 and 186.

likewiſe,

likewiſe, on his way towards Tours, at the head of the Hugonot forces; and it was already in agitation to advance towards the capital of France [13]. CHAP. VIII. 1589.

During the progreſs of theſe events, the duke of Mayenne, with a numerous and well-appointed army, having quitted Paris, marched to Vendome; the governor of which city, by an act of the baſeſt treachery, received him immediately into the place. The archbiſhop of Lyons, who was confined in the caſtle of Amboiſe, found means to convey to him information, that the count of Brienne, with a conſiderable body of Epernon's cavalry, lay diſperſed, in a ſtate of negligence and ſecurity, not far from Blois. Mayenne, profiting of the intelligence, attacked him without delay, cut in pieces a great number of his troops, and made Brienne himſelf priſoner. Encouraged by ſo proſperous a beginning, and informed that Henry himſelf was not ſecure in the poſition which he occupied at Tours; the duke reſolved to make an attempt upon his quarters, before the junction of the Hugonots ſhould render him too formidable. Arriving unexpectedly, after a forced march, in the ſuburbs, his advanced body of horſe had nearly captured the king; who, unapprehenſive of danger, had rode out, accompanied only by a few officers, with an intention to reconnoitre, and fortify the poſt. If the general of the League had inſtantly availed himſelf of the ſurprize occaſioned by his appearanec, and aſſailed the royal forces on every ſide; it is more than probable, that he might have obtained a deciſive victory: nor did he want adherents in the city itſelf, who, in ſuch a caſe, would have riſen, and completed the confuſion. But, the characteriſtic caution and prudence of Mayenne rendered him averſe to hazardous experiments, and allowed time to his opponents, for making a vigorous defence. Henry, on this occaſion, proved to his ſubjects, that, however his mind had been enervated by indolence and habits of ef-

8th April. Military operations of Mayenne.

29th April.

8th May. Attack of the ſuburbs of Tours.

Courage diſplayed by Henry.

[13] Davila, p. 794—799. De Thou, vol. x. p. 600—603. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 182 and 183.

feminacy,

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feminacy, he was not deſtitute either of perſonal courage, or of military capacity. Although unarmed, and unprepared for action, he betrayed no agitation; iſſued his orders with compoſure, and was every where preſent. During the ſubſequent part of the engagement, as the event was dubious, and might be unfortunate; his judicious directions repreſſed the intemperate ardor of the nobility, controuled the ſeditious ſpirit of the inhabitants, and were highly inſtrumental to render ineffectual the deſigns of the enemy. The royal troops, animated by the preſence and exertions of their ſovereign, behaved with incredible bravery, under manifeſt diſadvantages of number and ſituation. But, Mayenne, maſter of an eminence, from whence his artillery played upon the ſuburbs; and ſupplying with freſh ſoldiers, the places of thoſe who fell; towards the evening completely gained poſſeſſion of the poſt, notwithſtanding the deſperate reſiſtance made by Chatillon, who arrived with the vanguard of the Hugonots. The two armies remained oppoſite each other, during the night; prepared to renew the conteſt on the enſuing day, if Mayenne, apprehenſive of the approach of the king of Navarre in perſon with all his forces, had not decamped early in the morning, and taken the road towards Mans. He was purſued by a body of the royal cavalry; and towards noon, the arrival of the king of Navarre at Tours, diffuſed univerſal confidence. Henry received him as the beſt ſupport of his future hopes and operations; committed to his charge the conduct of the army; and ordered him to march forwards to Beaugency on the Loire [14].

Mayenne decamps.

The nobility aſſiſt the king.

17th May.

At the news of the duke of Mayenne's retreat, the nobility, who had regarded Henry's ſituation and affairs as deſperate, finding that he was ſtill able to make ſo vigorous a defence, flocked to the royal ſtandard. The revolt of Poitiers, which declared for the League, was over-balanced by the ſucceſs which, in other parts of the king-

[14] De Thou, vol. x. p. 622—628. Davila, p. 799—805. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 186—189. Sully's Memoires, folio edition, vol. i. p. 65 and 66. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 386—388.

dom,

dom, attended him; and only energy ſeemed wanting, to ſecure a prompt and happy termination of the war. Senlis, a city in the vicinity of Paris, having returned to its allegiance, and called in Thoré, brother to marſhal Montmorenci; was ſoon afterwards beſieged by the duke of Aumale, at the head of a numerous force, principally collected from among the inhabitants of the metropolis. He had been joined under the walls, by Balagny, governor of Cambray, with four thouſand troops; and the place was reduced to the utmoſt extremities. In theſe circumſtances, the duke of Longueville, aided by the celebrated La Noue, who had acquired a high reputation during the civil wars of France, did not heſitate to attack the Leaguers, though inferior to them in numbers, artillery, and every preparation. They obtained a deciſive victory; cut to pieces twelve hundred of the beſiegers, and obliged Aumale to ſeek his ſafety in a precipitate flight. Senlis was not only relieved; but, the victorious royaliſts, purſuing their advantage, threw ſupplies of proviſions into the caſtle of Vincennes, and even fired ſome vollies of cannon againſt Paris itſelf. On the other hand, Chatillon, at the head of a body of cavalry, was not leſs ſucceſsful in a rencounter with Saveuſe and La Broſſe, two adherents of the League, whom he charged and defeated near Bonneval, in the province of Chartres. Both the chiefs periſhed in the action, together with above a hundred of the nobility of Picardy [15].

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1589. Siege of Senlis.

17th May. Victory of the royaliſts.

18th May. Subſequent advantages.

Such was the alarm occaſioned in the metropolis, by the diſaſter at Senlis, and ſo dejected were the boldeſt partizans of the family of Guiſe; that the council of the Union having met, determined inſtantly to ſolicit the return of Mayenne. The ducheſs of Montpenſier, who perſonally deſpiſed the duke of Aumale, and whoſe contempt was augmented by his recent defeat; urged her brother not to loſe a moment in re-aſſuring the fickle and terrified inhabitants of the capital. That general, after his ill ſucceſs

Alarm at Paris.

22d May

[15] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 204—212. De Thou, vol. x. p. 632—643. Davila, p. 805—808, and 810. Sully, vol. i. p. 66. L'Etoile, p. 280.

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before Tours, had made himſelf maſter of Alenſon in Normandy; and he no ſooner received the intelligence of La Noue's victory, together with the meſſengers from Paris, than he bent his march thither. His appearance appeaſed, though it did not extinguiſh, the popular emotion; and he prepared for a vigorous oppoſition. But, the tide of fortune appeared to have rapidly turned in favor of the crown; and Henry, after experiencing all its rigor, was on the point of reſuming his nearly extinct prerogatives. No effective impediment was interpoſed to the progreſs of his forces, who ſucceſſively ſtormed the few places that ventured on reſiſtance. At Eſtampes, which was taken by aſſault, the king, irritated at the pertinacity of his rebellious ſubjects, abandoned the place to pillage, and cauſed the magiſtrates to be immediately executed. To augment his ſatisfaction, Sancy, whom he had diſpatched to levy an army in Switzerland, ſucceeded beyond his moſt ſanguine expectations. That faithful and zealous miniſter not only induced the Cantons to aid him with troops; but, he obtained from them a ſupply of money, ſtill more eſſential in the diſtreſſed condition of his ſovereign's finances. After having carried an offenſive war into the dominions of the duke of Savoy, in retaliation for his invaſion and capture of the marquiſate of Saluzzo; Sancy conducted the Swiſs and German forces into Burgundy. Near Langres, in that province, La Noue and the duke of Longueville, by Henry's orders, met him, in order to ſuperintend and direct his march towards Paris, the point of general union. So many fortunate events were checquered, but, in no degree, counterbalanced, by the ill ſucceſs of the count of Soiſſons; who, having been ſent to command in Brittany, was ſurprized, defeated, and made priſoner, by the duke of Mercœur, at Chateau Giron, near Rennes [16].

Return of Mayenne to the capital.

Rapid progreſs of the royal army.

Military operations.

July.

The king, advancing rapidly towards the capital, unoppoſed by any enemy, was joined at Poiſſy on the Seine, by Montpenſier, at the

[16] De Thou, vol. x. p. 614—661. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 213—220. Davila, p. 808—812. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 176—180.

head

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head of a conſiderable body of men, from Normandy. With a view of reducing Paris to experience the diſtreſſes of famine, he laid ſiege to Pontoiſe, which ſurrendered, after a brave and obſtinate defence. On the following day, Sancy having redoubled his ſpeed, in order to arrive in the royal camp, paſſed the bridge of Poiſſy, with his numerous army, amounting to near ten thouſand Switzers, two thouſand German infantry, and fifteen hundred cavalry of the ſame nation. They were reviewed by Henry in perſon, who publickly returned his acknowledgments to their commander, for ſo ſignal a ſervice, rendered ſtill more important, by the critical emergency in which it was performed. The troops of the League were driven from St. Cloud, by the impetuoſity of the royaliſts; and the paſs which that village commanded on the Seine, being immediately occupied by the king in perſon, who eſtabliſhed there his head-quarters, Paris began to be cloſely inveſted on every ſide. His forces exceeded thirty thouſand in number, elated by ſucceſs, and deſirous of diſplaying their fidelity and courage. On the contrary, the affairs of Mayenne were declining, and nearly deſperate. His troops ſcarcely amounted to eight thouſand foot, and about eighteen hundred horſe, diminiſhing hourly and rapidly, in conſequence of famine, diſcontent, and ſcarcity of ſubſiſtence. The ſuccours, which the dukes of Lorrain and Nemours had undertaken to conduct, were diſtant, and could not avert the immediate danger. Mayenne himſelf, who had quartered his ſoldiers in the ſuburbs of the capital, vainly endeavoured to reſtore tranquillity, and to allay the terrors of the inhabitants. There were, beſides, in the city, a number of perſons, well affected to the royal cauſe, who only waited a favorable moment to declare, and to exert themſelves in its behalf. All the exhortations of the ducheſſes of Guiſe, Nemours, and Montpenſier, were ineffectual to ſuſtain the Pariſians, under the apprehenſion of a puniſhment, imminent and ſevere. It was generally known, that Henry, rendered inexorable by the inſolence and atrocity of their conduct, had declared his determination to exact a cruel and memorable atonement, which might impreſs

1589.
24th July. Capture of Poiſſy.

Arrival of the Swiſs auxiliaries.

Henry approaches Paris. 29th July.

State of Mayenne.

Danger, and conſternation of the capital.

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preſs his rebellious ſubjects with awe, throughout the kingdom. Every meaſure was already taken for a general aſſault, the ſucceſs of which could ſcarcely be doubtful. Mayenne, with a generous, though ineffectual deſpair, had embraced the reſolution of putting himſelf at the head of four thouſand of his choiceſt troops, devoted to death; of charging the enemy, and either cutting his way through them, or periſhing on the field of battle. No ſituation could be more hopeleſs than that of the League; nor any triumph more aſſured, than that of Henry; when one of thoſe events which mock all calculation, and decide the fate of nations, deprived the king of his crown and life, at the ſame time that it extricated Mayenne from manifeſt, and almoſt inevitable deſtruction [17].

Hiſtory of Clement.

A Monk, ſcarcely twenty-three years old, of the Dominican order, by name James Clement, was the author of ſo extraordinary, and important a revolution. Naturally ferocious, gloomy, and capable of projecting the moſt daring enterprize; he poſſeſſed the intrepidity and coolneſs requiſite for its execution. Diſſolute, ignorant, and eaſily excited to commit any act, however immoral or atrocious, when encouraged by the exhortations of his ſuperiors; he undertook, at the ſuggeſtion, and with the approbation of Bourgoing, the prior of his convent, to aſſaſſinate the king. Every artifice which cunning can practiſe upon credulity and fanaticiſm, was uſed to ſuſtain, and to inflame his purpoſe. Not only earthly rewards and honours; but, a celeſtial recompence was aſſured to the champion and the martyr of the Holy Union. The ducheſs of Montpenſier, menaced by Henry with the moſt exemplary and ignominious puniſhment, as ſoon as he ſhould be maſter of Paris; is even ſaid to have made ſacrifices, calculated to animate a depraved and ſenſual Monk, and to ſtimulate him to the perpetration of any crime, however flagitious. The manners of that age, and the magnitude of

He undertakes to aſſaſſinate Henry.

[17] Davila, p. 812—815. De Thou, vol. x. p. 661—666.

the

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the impending evil, render it highly probable, that Clement was encouraged to the attempt by her, as well as by the duke of Mayenne himſelf. It is inconteſtable, that he was provided with letters of introduction, by the preſident of the parliament of Paris, Harlai, then a priſoner in the Baſtile; and by the count of Brienne, who was detained in the Louvre. Thoſe zealous adherents of the crown, were impoſed on by his aſſurances of loyalty, and of a deſire to repair with important intelligence, to the royal camp.

31ſt July. He arrives in the royal camp.

Furniſhed with his credentials, the Monk quitted Paris; and being ſoon ſtopped by the advanced guards, was conducted to La Gueſle, the ſolicitor general. As he profeſſed to be charged with a meſſage to the king, of the moſt confidential nature; it being too late to procure him an audience on the ſame evening, he remained with La Gueſle, ſupped heartily, and during the night ſlept with perfect compoſure. Henry had received ſo many, and ſuch recent intimations, of perſons being employed to aſſaſſinate him; that it would have been difficult, if not impracticable, for any man, except an eccleſiaſtic, to have procured acceſs to him, without previous precautions. But, his predilection for all individuals of the monaſtic order, exceeded belief, and laid him open to the ſnare: a circumſtance, of which Clement's inſtigators were, unqueſtionably, well apprized. On the enſuing morning, at an early hour, when the king was ſtill undreſſed, Clement was brought into his preſence; and having preſented the letter from the count of Brienne, while Henry was attentively occupied in peruſing it, the Monk took a knife from his ſleeve, and with incredible quickneſs, plunged it into his belly. Feeling himſelf wounded, the king inſtantly drew the weapon, with which he ſtruck his aſſaſſin upon the forehead. La Gueſle, Lognac, and Mirepoix, who were preſent, not maſters of their indignation and horror, at the ſight of their ſovereign, bleeding, and as they imagined, expiring; fell upon the monk with their ſwords, and put him to death. His body

1ſt Auguſt. Aſſaſſination of the king.

Circumſtances accompanying it.

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body was thrown out of the window, burnt by the ſoldiers, and his aſhes ſcattered in the Seine [18].

1589. Death of Henry.

Henry's wound, though alarming, did not, on the firſt inſpection, appear to be mortal. But, when the ſurgeons had examined it anew, and had aſcertained, that the bowels were pierced, they announced to him his diſſolution, as certain. He received the information with calmneſs, ordered the doors of his apartment to be thrown open in order to admit the nobility, and prepared with reſignation, for his approaching end. Having repeatedly embraced the king of Navarre, and conjured, as well as adviſed him to embrace the Catholic religion, if he ever hoped to reign over the French; he declared that prince to be his only, and legitimate ſucceſſor. As ſuch, he exhorted the officers and nobles who ſurrounded his bed, to regard him in the light of their future ſovereign, notwithſtanding his difference of religious perſuaſion. He expreſſed his deep concern at the unfortunate condition in which he left the kingdom; performed, with marks of penitence and piety, the ceremonies enjoined by the Romiſh church, and expired on the following day. By his queen, Louiſa of Vaudemont, he left no iſſue; and at the time of his deceaſe, he had not quite completed his thirty-eighth year, of which he had reigned above fifteen. His body, embalmed with as much decorum, as the circumſtances of the time would permit, was carried to Compiegne; and Benoiſe, one of his few faithful ſervants, interred his heart and his entrails, privately, in the church of St. Cloud [19].

His exhortations, and commands.

2d Auguſt.

Character of Henry.

The character of Henry the Third is ſtrikingly pourtrayed, and faithfully delineated, in the events of his reign. No prince ever excited greater and more univerſal expectation, before he ſucceeded to

[18] De Thou, vol. x. p. 667—671. Davila, p. 815—817.

[19] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 220 - 224. L'Etoile, p. 284—286, and 289—300. Sulli, vol. i. p. 67 and 68. Chiverni, vol. i. p. 140—143. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 394—398. De Thou, vol. x. p. 671—674. Davila, p. 817—819. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 180—183.

the

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the crown: none ever more completely diſappointed the hopes entertained of his capacity and virtue. The luſtre of his victories at Jarnac and Montcontour, where he commanded the armies of Charles the Ninth, gave him the higheſt reputation throughout all Europe, and facilitated his election to the throne of Poland. But, he was ſcarcely arrived in that country, when the death of his brother induced him to fly from his new capital, with circumſtances of precipitation unbecoming his dignity, and injurious to his fame. Before he reached the frontiers of his hereditary dominions, his improvident liberality had already diminiſhed the poſſeſſions, and contracted the territories of France, by the donation of Pignerol and Savillan to Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy. Inſtead of extinguiſhing the civil wars, and diſpenſing peace to all his ſubjects, upon his return, as policy and wiſdom dictated; the pernicious counſels of his mother, and of his intereſted, or perfidious miniſters, impelled him to perſecute the Hugonots, who only demanded toleration and protection. Convinced by experience of the impoſſibility of tyrannizing over the conſcience, or reducing the Proteſtants by the ſword; he adopted more enlarged and humane maxims of government: the edict of Poitiers, which reſtored tranquillity, was his own meaſure, and always cheriſhed by him as ſuch. But, the Guiſes, whom Henry ſtudiouſly depreſſed; mortified at the diminution of the power and conſideration which they had enjoyed under the three preceding reigns; and incenſed to ſee the elevation of favorites and minions to the higheſt offices of truſt and dignity; counteracted his deſigns. In order to do it with effect, they knew that religion muſt be made the maſk for concealing and advancing their ſchemes of ambition. The king, notwithſtanding his diſinclination to war, was reluctantly compelled to violate his engagements, to reſcind his edicts, and even to become eventually the inſtrument of his own humiliation. Guiſe, maſter of the *metropolis*, drove his ſovereign from thence; dictated the conditions upon which he conſented to a reconciliation; and inſulted

His inclination to toleration,

Violence, exerciſed over him by the League.

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ſulted the monarch, whom he had previouſly diſarmed. Yet, ſuch was the paſſive and indolent temper of Henry, and ſo rooted was his antipathy to the Hugonots; that if Guiſe had not proceeded to acts which left no doubt of his intention to uſurp the whole effective authority of the crown; the king would, probably, never have reſiſted. A rebellion was the conſequence; not ſo much of the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes, as of the inactive ſecurity which followed, on the part of Henry; and it produced, by a neceſſary train of events, the reconciliation with the king of Navarre. At the moment when he juſtly anticipated the reduction of Paris, he periſhed by the hand of a private and obſcure individual, whoſe order he had always protected and favoured. Throughout his whole life, he ſeems to have cheriſhed thoſe, who betrayed, or outraged him; and he was deſtined to experience the moſt cruel injuries, from his neareſt connexions. Joyeuſe, whom he had raiſed to the higheſt point of greatneſs, deſerted his benefactor, to join the League. His brother-in-law, the duke of Mercœur, revolted, notwithſtanding the diſtinguiſhed favors received from the crown; and he attempted to render himſelf independant in the province of Bretagne. Catherine of Medecis, his mother, with a view to balance the credit of the minions, ſecretly inſtigated and encouraged the princes of Lorrain, in their treaſonable projects of aggrandizement. Even his own queen, a princeſs of irreproachable manners, but, of a bigotted and melancholy diſpoſition, was ſeduced to eſpouſe the intereſts of her family, rather than that of her huſband.

Fatality and imprudence of his attachments.

Henry poſſeſſed many amiable qualities, and ſome great endowments. To a graceful and majeſtic perſon, he added ſuavity of manners, affability, liberality, clemency, the love of juſtice, courage, and temperance. But, all his virtues degenerated into vices, or were enervated by indolence and pleaſure, to ſuch a degree, as

Endowments, and vices of Henry.

to

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to call in queſtion their very exiſtence. His munificence became profuſion; and ceaſed to attach thoſe who were the objects of it, becauſe they attributed his benefits more to facility and prodigality, than to generoſity. He degraded the majeſty of his high rank, and almoſt rendered queſtionable the ſanity of his underſtanding, by his puerile, or unbecoming aſſociations with Monks and Penitents. Far from producing the effect which he intended, of acquiring popularity, ſuch a conduct completed his ruin. His diſſipation neceſſitated him to have recourſe to the moſt fatal expedients, to maintain his court, and to fill the exhauſted treaſury. The venality of charges, multiplication of offices, and accumulation of taxes, at length undermined the foundations on which reſted his throne, and enabled his enemies to atchieve their pernicious purpoſes. At his deceaſe, he left the monarchy convulſed, and nearly overthrown: it required the talents, heroiſm, and good fortune of Henry the Fourth, to reſtore it, and to diſperſe the chaos, into which the mal-adminiſtration of his predeceſſor had plunged the kingdom. The circumſtances in which he expired, and the atrocity of the crime that produced his death, rendered him, in ſome degree, regretted; and ſeemed to expiate, or obliterate, the ſeries of errors, faults, and vices, which render his reign one of the moſt melancholy and calamitous portions of modern hiſtory[20].

State of France at his deceaſe.

In his perſon, expired the branch of Valois, which under thirteen kings, had reigned over the French nation, during the ſpace of two hundred and ſixty-one years. With the ſingle exception of Philip of Valois himſelf, ſource of the line, they were diſtinguiſhed by their love and protection of letters. Charles the Fifth, in wiſdom; Louis the Twelfth, in paternal affection for his people; and Francis the Firſt, in magnanimity, elevation of mind,

Retroſpect of the reigns of the princes of Valois.

Virtues.

[20] De Thou, vol. x. p. 674—678. Davila, p. 820.

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and cultivation of the arts, have not yielded to any monarchs, of any period. Perſonal courage ſeems to have been hereditary among them; though its peculiar and characteriſtic quality was varied in different princes. It was raſh and impetuous, in Philip and John: ſubdued to the dictates of policy, in Charles the Fifth, and Louis the Eleventh: unequal, in Charles the Seventh: adventurous, in Charles the Eighth: ſteady and temperate, in Louis the Twelfth: brilliant and captivating, in Francis the Firſt: ferocious, in Charles the Ninth: indolent and paſſive, in Henry the Third.

Their virtues were eclipſed by their greater vices and misfortunes. Two of the number, John, and Francis, were taken priſoners in the field, and conducted as captives to London, and to Madrid. It would be difficult to parallel the reigns of Charles the Sixth, of Charles the Ninth, and of Henry the Third, in every ſpecies of misfortune, reſulting from civil and religious anarchy. Even the moſt proſperous and tranquil periods were clouded by inteſtine commotions, or ſtained by cruelty and tyranny. If neither of theſe deſcriptions will apply to the mild adminiſtration of Louis the Twelfth; yet, that beneficent reign, ſhort in its duration, was marked by continual foreign war, and the greateſt national loſſes and reverſes. Louis the Eleventh ſtands nearly alone, in the liſt of monſters, who have trampled upon the rights of humanity; and the ſuperiority of his talents, employed for purpoſes of deſtruction, only renders him more conſpicuouſly an object of deteſtation.

Vices and misfortunes.

Neither their defects of character, fortune, nor adminiſtration, were, nevertheleſs, ſuch, as to prevent the gradual and progreſſive augmentation of the grandeur, power, and dominions of France. Philip of Valois obtained by addreſs and purchaſe, the important province of Dauphiné, with all its dependancies. To the valor and good conduct of Charles the Seventh, was due the expulſion

Progreſſive aggrandizement of France.

of

of the Engliſh from the kingdom, of which they occupied ſo conſiderable a portion. Louis the Eleventh added the rich acquiſition of Burgundy, by conqueſt, on the death of Charles the Bold; and of Provence, by bequeſt, at the deceaſe of Charles the Third, the laſt prince of the Angevin race. Brittany was acquired by the marriage of Charles the Eighth, with Anne, the heireſs of that duchy; confirmed by Louis the Twelfth's ſubſequent nuptials with the ſame princeſs; and finally incorporated into the monarchy, by Francis the Firſt. The extinction of the houſe of Valois, and the elevation of that of Bourbon to the throne, forms a great and intereſting era in the hiſtory of France. CHAP. VIII. 1589.

THE HISTORY OF FRANCE.

BOOK THE SECOND.

Age of HENRY THE THIRD.

CHAP. I.

Nature, limits, and extent of the royal power, under the laſt princes of Valois.—Functions of the States General.—Inſtitution, and privileges of the parliaments.—Provincial aſſemblies.—Revenues.—Management of the finances.—Public funds.—Coin.—Military force.—Infantry.—Cavalry.—Arms.—Exceſſes of the ſoldiery.—Artillery.—Ranſoms.—Navy.—Gallies.—General ſtate of the French marine.

CHAP. I. Prerogatives of the French kings.

THE prerogatives, enjoyed and exerciſed, as well by Henry the Third, as by all the kings of France, his predeceſſors, during the courſe of the ſixteenth century, might be ſaid to approach nearly to that ſpecies of power, which we juſtly denominate arbitrary and unlimited. Louis the Eleventh, who combined in his character greater vices and greater talents, than were, perhaps, ever ſeen united on the throne in

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one man, had, by the oppreſſion and deſtruction of the nobility, erected the deſpotiſm of the crown upon their ruins. The people were gainers by the exchange of a ſingle tyrant, inſtead of many: for, it would be equally abſurd and falſe, to ſuppoſe, that, at any period ſince the elevation of the family of Capet, and the formation of the feudal ſyſtem; the nation collectively was poſſeſſed of civil liberty, guaranteed by laws againſt royal and ariſtocratic encroachment. Almoſt all the odious branches of prerogative, exerciſed in England by the princes of the houſe of Tudor, and wreſted from thoſe of Stuart, were veſted by long preſcription in the French monarchs. The ableſt civilians, the graveſt writers, and the wiſeſt magiſtrates, who flouriſhed between the acceſſion of Henry the Second and the death of Henry the Third, agreed in recognizing the unlimited powers of the crown. "The kings of France," ſays Cayet, a contemporary author, "do not reſemble the Poliſh ſovereigns, and "others who ſwear at their election to obſerve the laws made by "thoſe who have elected them: but, on the contrary, they have "the ſupreme and abſolute authority over their people. On their "will, depend all the deliberations of peace and war; the taxes and "tributes, the diſtribution of benefices, offices, governments, and "magiſtrates[1]." It ſeems ſcarcely poſſible to deſcribe deſpotiſm in clearer colours. Charles the Ninth, when hardly paſt the limits of childhood, did not heſitate to ſay to the parliament of Paris, compoſed of the moſt reſpectable individuals for age, virtue, and talents; "It is for you to obey my orders, without preſuming to examine "them; for I know better than you what is the cuſtom of the king"dom, and what order and decorum demand[2]." Whatever indignation ſuch a ſpeech might excite, it produced no remonſtrance, nor reclamation on the part of the parliament.

Unlimited power, exerciſed by them.

Language of Charles the Ninth.

When the Proteſtant princes of the German empire preſumed, in 1586, to repreſent to Henry the Third the injuſtice of violating his

[1] Chron. Novenn. vol. i. p. 4.
[2] Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 27. Brantome, vol. iv. p. 34.

own

own edicts, granting liberty of conſcience to his Hugonot ſubjects; he replied, in preſence of the whole court, in theſe words: "It belongs to me alone, to judge, according to my prudence, of "what may contribute to the public welfare; to make laws for pro-"curing it; to interpret thoſe laws, to change, or to aboliſh them, "as I ſhall judge proper: I have done it hitherto, and I ſhall do it "in future[3]." Even in the memorable aſſembly of the States General at Blois, two years afterwards, although he profeſſed his readineſs to abide by the determinations which he ſhould embrace, in conjunction with the delegates of the nation; yet, he did not omit to ſtate, that ſuch a condeſcenſion was the pure effect of his own deſire to contribute to the felicity of his people. He even apologized for ſo ſtrong a deviation from the conduct of his predeceſſors; and obviated the reproaches which might be made him, for ſubjecting himſelf to the laws which he had previouſly ordained[4]. Montluc, Davila, Chiverny, Villeroi, and almoſt all the other writers of that period, when ſpeaking of the royal authority, regard it as paramount to law, and ſuperior to any controul.

Arbitrary impriſonment.

Among the branches of prerogative moſt frequently exerciſed, was that of arbitrary impriſonment. No rank, profeſſion, nor ſtation were exempt, or protected from it; and the cauſes, or pretexts upon which it was enforced, were ſo various, that they might be ſaid to include every ſpecies of offence. Treaſon or hereſy were the moſt ordinary; and ſuſpicion alone, independant of proof, was ſufficient to condemn to a long and ſevere captivity, any ſubject, however elevated, or illuſtrious. D'Andelot, colonel-general of the French infantry, and brother to the celebrated Coligni, being queſtioned by Henry the Second, reſpecting his belief of the real preſence in the Euchariſt; and having replied in a manner diſpleaſing to that orthodox monarch, was immediately ſent priſoner to the caſtle of Melun.

Under Henry the Second.

[3] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 609.

[4] Ibid. vol. x. p. 301.

He

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He was, it is true, ſpeedily releaſed, at the powerful interceſſion of his uncle, the conſtable Montmorenci: but, even the ſanctity of juſtice could not protect from a ſimilar treatment, various members of the parliament of Paris. The preſidents du Bourg, and du Faur, ſuſpected of holding heretical doctrines, were ſeized while exerciſing their judicial functions, in their ſeats; and three others were arreſted in their houſes [5]. Under the following reign, in 1560, Louis, prince of Condé, though allied to the royal blood, and attending the convocation of the States General, to which he had been invited by aſſurances of ſafety; was, notwithſtanding, arreſted, and committed to cuſtody. The caſe was rendered ſtill ſtronger, by the conſideration, that Francis the Second, who authorized ſo violent an act of authority, had not attained to manhood; and was, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the term, a minor, when he ventured upon the meaſure [6].

Francis the Second.

Charles the Ninth.

Charles the Ninth, or, more properly, Catherine of Medecis, availing herſelf of his power, as he lay expiring; did not ſcruple, in 1574, to ſend the marſhals Montmorenci and Coſſé, to the Baſtile, on ſuſpicions, never clearly aſcertained, of their being privy to the deſign of the duke of Alenſon to withdraw from court. Nor did the quality of that prince himſelf, who was, after the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, preſumptive heir to the crown, preſerve him from experiencing the ſame treatment. He, as well as Henry, king of Navarre, firſt prince of the blood, were long detained captive in the Louvre, by Henry the Third, from motives only of ſtate precaution [7].

Henry the Third.

Creation of tribunals, for the trial of offences.

The inſtitution and creation of commiſſions for the trial of crimes, pretended or real, was another branch of the royal authority, conſtantly enforced; and which laid at the mercy of the crown, the life and freedom of every ſubject. Numerous, and ſtriking inſtances of this practice, occur throughout the reigns of the laſt princes of the houſe of Valois. In many, the forms, as well as the eſſence of juſ-

5 D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 84.

6 Davila, p. 73.

7 Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 121 and 122. Davila, p. 399, 400.

tice,

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tice, were equally violated. Henry the Second, a ſhort time before his death, after arreſting the members of the parliament of Paris, named commiſſioners to form a tribunal for their trial. It was compoſed of ſeveral counſellors of that body itſelf, ſelected for their approved zeal, or devotion to the orders of the court; of the biſhop of Paris, and the inquiſitor of the faith. Du Bourg pleaded his privilege as a counſellor of the parliament and of the church, in order to exempt himſelf from their juriſdiction; but, his objections were over-ruled [8]. Under Francis the Second, in 1560, by the edict of Romorentin, a court was erected in every parliament of the kingdom, to which was excluſively confined the trial of heretics. Theſe tribunals, from their ſeverity, were denominated "Les Chambres "Ardentes:" a title, which ſufficiently denotes their deſtination. In the caſe of the prince of Condé, arreſted towards the cloſe of the ſame year, at Orleans; the crown, without any regard to his birth and privileges, named a tribunal to try him, compoſed only of three lawyers, taken from among the preſidents and counſellors of the parliament of Paris; acting under the lord chancellor, as preſident. The attorney-general was plaintiff and accuſer; the firſt notary of the court of parliament being appointed to take minutes of the proceedings on the trial. It will ſcarcely be matter of ſurprize, that ſuch judges ſhould declare the prince guilty of treaſon, and ſentence him to loſe his head. He vainly reclaimed the right of being tried before the parliament of Paris fully aſſembled, in preſence of the king, the peers of France, and all the great officers of the crown. No regard was paid to theſe demands, though founded on immemorial uſage; and the royal pleaſure ſupplied every deficiency in point of form [9].

Tribunals for the trial of heretics.

Trial of the prince of Condé.

Nor did the power of the French kings, on a ſuperficial view, appear to be leſs unlimited over the property, than over the lives and

Right of levying taxes.

[8] D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 84.

[9] L'Art de Verif. les Dates, tom. i. p. 645. Davila, p. 75.

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liberties of the ſubject. Louis the Eleventh, who ſacrificed the nobility to his vengeance, did not venture to impoſe contributions on the people, without ſome form of law, and ſanction of their repreſentatives. It was not till the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, that the French kings diſdained to aſk, and began to lay taxes on the nation, by the ſole virtue and plenitude of their prerogative [10]. Henry the Third, during the whole courſe of his reign, exerciſed it in its fulleſt extent; and he varied the modes of impoſing them, and the contribution itſelf, in every poſſible way that ingenuity and oppreſſion could deviſe. In 1578, twenty-two new edicts, or taxes, were iſſued by him, and ſent to the parliament of Paris to be regiſtered and publiſhed [11]. Seventeen more were added, at one time, in 1586; many of which were very onerous, and occaſioned univerſal complaint [12]. As if theſe impoſitions were not ſufficiently heavy, arbitrary exactions, without the name of taxes, were forced from the people. In January, 1587, Henry demanded of the kingdom at large, the ſum of three hundred thouſand crowns; and of the city of Paris, no leſs than three hundred and ſixty thouſand crowns, excluſively [13]. Loans were another ordinary mode of raiſing ſupplies; and they were, as may be imagined, abſolutely compulſory. In 1576, the counſellors, and advocates of the parliament of Paris, were commanded to repair to the Louvre, and ordered to lend his majeſty, each, according to his ability, a certain ſum. About four thouſand pounds ſterling were raiſed by this expedient [14]. Similar exactions were practiſed on the wealthy citizens of the metropolis.

Compulſory loans.

Creation of offices.

The creation of poſts and offices, for which the perſons who occupied or exerciſed them, paid conſiderable ſums, was one of the moſt intolerable abuſes, iſſuing out of the arbitrary power of the crown. It was, indeed, more injurious to the people, than beneficial to the

[10] Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 428.
[11] L'Etoile, Journ. p. 31. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729.
[12] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 596. L'Etoile, p. 91.
[13] L'Etoile, p. 98.
[14] Memoires pour ſervir a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 65. L'Etoile, p. 17.

exchequer;

exchequer; and was carried, under Henry the Third, to an incredible height. In 1581, nine edicts of this nature were publiſhed; and in the following year, four more were iſſued, the profits ariſing from which were avowedly deſtined for the two powerful favorites, Joyeuſe, and Epernon [15]. Villeroi expreſsly aſſerts, that fifteen, or ſixteen hundred officers were employed in the collection of the revenues, all of whom had purchaſed their places, and the aggregate of whoſe annual appointments amounted to near a hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. Of theſe, above one hundred and eighty were entitled treaſurers of France, and had each, a ſalary of five hundred crowns. He adds, as the ſtrongeſt proof of the peculation and plunder committed in the management of the finances, that every piece of three livres, or half a crown Engliſh, levied on the ſubject, was reduced, in paſſing through ſo many hands, to leſs than threepence halfpenny, before it entered the royal treaſury [16]. It is to be obſerved, that no higher, nor more inconteſtable authority than Villeroi, can be cited: he was ſecretary of ſtate under Charles the Ninth, Henry the Third, and Fourth; by all of whom he was entruſted with the moſt profound ſecrets of government.

Venality of places.

It was cuſtomary to ſend letters, ſigned by the ſovereign, or by his miniſters, to corporate bodies, and even to individuals of reputed wealth, demanding either a free gift, or a loan of ſtipulated ſums. Few perſons dared to ſlight, or to refuſe the requiſition. Even eccleſiaſtics, who, in that age, were exempted under various pretences, from contributing, in a due proportion, to the general wants of the ſtate, were frequently taxed by Henry. In 1578, inſtead of the tenth and twentieth, which he had demanded of the clergy, he thought proper to ſubſtitute mandates, ſubſcribed with his own hand, deſiring them to lend him certain ſums. They were apportioned according to the faculties of the parties. The chapter of Paris "in Globo," was fixed at ſix hundred crowns: Mariau, a rich canon, at two

Royal letters of requiſition.

[15] L'Etoile, p. 42. Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 152.
[16] Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 425 and 426.

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hundred and fifty; and others, at inferior rates. This arbitrary ſubſtitution excited great murmurs, and does not ſeem to have met with compliance in all inſtances [17].

Rapacious exactions from perſons in trade.

Perſons trading in the articles of wine and ſalt, appear to have been objects of royal rapacity, in a more than common degree. In December, 1582, all the wholeſale wine merchants in the city of Paris were compelled to pay within twenty-four hours, on pain of impriſonment, ſums from five hundred crowns, diminiſhing according to their ſuppoſed means, in a regular gradation. Similar demands were, at the ſame time, extended to the dealers in ſalt, throughout the whole kingdom [18]. The people were every where obliged to purchaſe at the king's ſtorehouſe, ſuch a quantity of this latter article, as the commiſſaries, inſtituted for the purpoſe, ſhould eſtimate to be requiſite for their private conſumption. The edict, enjoining obedience to ſo cruel an act of oppreſſion, was obtained from Henry, in 1581; but, it met with very general oppoſition in the provinces [19]. About the ſame time, he doubled the impoſition of ten ſous, or five-pence, antecedently levied upon every hogſhead of wine, coming in, or going out of all the cities of the kingdom, and their ſuburbs. It was neceſſary, in order to vanquiſh the repugnance of the parliament to publiſh this edict, that Henry ſhould write a menacing letter with his own hand, commanding ſubmiſſion [20].

The people, compelled to purchaſe ſalt.

Duties upon wine.

Cuſtoms and duties.

The authority of the crown was not leſs arbitrary over the cuſtoms and duties, paid upon the importation, or exportation of every commodity into France. There were, however, treaties ſubſiſting with foreign powers, particularly with England, by which the king was reſtrained from raiſing, or diminiſhing them, in all caſes, at his pleaſure. In 1577, upon the complaint of the Engliſh embaſſador, the augmented duties recently impoſed upon goods from that country,

[17] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 99.
[18] Ibid. p. 154.
[19] Memoires pour ſer a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 127.
[20] Ibid. p. 127 and 128.

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were taken off by the French government [21]. It ſeems, that, in the river Garonne, and probably, throughout the whole kingdom, theſe were two and a half per cent. on every branch of merchandize, imported, or exported [22]. The right of pre-emption was exerciſed by the crown; and we find Charles the Ninth, in 1573, iſſuing peremptory directions to the governor of Bourdeaux, to take meaſures for ſecuring all the beſt and fineſt wines made in its vicinity, for the uſe of Elizabeth, his ally, queen of England [23]. Even over acts of a more private and perſonal nature, in which the revenue had no concern, immediate or remote, the royal interference was equally ſtrict and univerſal. No perſon, of whatever quality, could paſs the limits of France, without permiſſion. Catherine of Medecis, when regent, after the death of Charles the Ninth, iſſued a prohibition to travel, unleſs after leave obtained [24]. Marriages the moſt violent and compulſory, were celebrated between perſons of the higheſt deſcription and rank, in conſequence of a peremptory injunction of the king.

Pre-emption.

Inferior prerogatives.

Charles the Ninth, deſirous to attach to himſelf Chriſtopher de Baſſompierre, and to fix him in the court of France, ſelected for him a young lady of noble birth, named Louiſa de Radeval, neice to marſhal Briſſac. Her fortune amounted to the prodigious ſum of fifty thouſand crowns. She expreſſed, as did all her relations, the moſt unqualified reluctance to contract a marriage with a German, who was unacquainted with the language and manners of France, and who was not poſſeſſed of any patrimonial inheritance, being only a younger brother. But, Charles's determination overcame every impediment, and procured the immediate celebration of the nuptials [25]. It may be matter of ſurprize, that among the exertions of ſo undefined or unlimited a prerogative, we find no trace of two branches, poſſeſſed by the Engliſh princes down to Charles the Firſt, and which were ſtrong badges of ſervi-

[21] Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 529.

[22] Ibid. vol. iii. p. 536.

[23] Ibid. p. 367.

[24] Le Laboureur ſur Caſtelnau, vol. iii. p. 417.

[25] Memoires de Baſſompierre, vol. i. p. 15.

tude.

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tude. Theſe were purveyance, and wardſhips. If the former was ever enforced, it was only a temporary act of violence or oppreſſion. No court of wards exiſted in France, at any period of the ſixteenth century.

Barriers againſt the power of the crown.

Notwithſtanding the enormous extent of the power veſted in the French kings, the wiſdom of the nation had erected bulwarks for its reſtraint, when too violently exerted. Theſe were, however, it muſt be owned, rather intended for the protection of property, than calculated for ſecuring their lives and freedom. In fact, we find by experience, that cruelty is directed towards a few individuals: rapacity extends over a whole people. The two great barriers between the crown and the ſubject, were the aſſembly of the States General, and the Parliaments; peculiarly, that of Paris. The States, which were, under various denominations, coeval with the monarchy itſelf; and which bore an intimate reſemblance to the parliaments of England; were compoſed of delegates from the nobility, clergy, and the third eſtate. The French monarchs, who did not, like the Engliſh princes of the family of Tudor, their contemporaries, ſtand in need of the approbation of the repreſentatives of the nation, to confirm their ordinary acts of tyranny, or to impoſe ſubſidies; had ſuffered the aſſembly of the States General to fall into deſuetude, during a great part of the ſixteenth century. Francis the Firſt, in the courſe of a long reign of thirty-two years, marked by many reverſes, had never once convoked that body. They were tumultuouſly aſſembled, for a ſhort time, after the memorable defeat of St. Quintin, by Henry the Second, his ſon. But, when Francis the Second aſcended the throne, and the great factions began to diſturb the tranquillity of the kingdom, it was deemed neceſſary to have recourſe to the powerful engine of the States. They were held at Orleans, in 1560; interrupted by the deceaſe of the young king; and reſumed in the following year, by Charles the Ninth, his ſucceſſor. Henry the Third aſſembled them twice; in 1576, and in 1588. In order to form an accurate

The States General.

Rarely convoked.

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accurate idea of the degree of influence which the national repreſentatives poſſeſſed, in reſtraining or tempering the authority of the crown, it is requiſite to follow the leading ſteps of their conduct.

Objects propoſed by Henry the Third, in aſſembling the States.

The oſtenſible motive of Henry, in convoking the States in 1576, was to determine on the meaſures to be embraced reſpecting the Hugonots. But, his concealed objects were, to induce them to grant him extraordinary aids of money, and to conſent to the alienation of a part of the royal domain. At their meeting, he promiſed them, in his harangue from the throne, to obſerve inviolably the regulations, which, in concert with him, they ſhould make; and to grant no diſpenſation nor privilege, that could derogate from them in any manner. When, however, he found, that the third eſtate was proceeding to adopt counſels calculated to diminiſh his prerogatives, and tending to render themſelves independant in their deliberations; he changed his behaviour, and either eluded, or rejected their demands. The States, on their part, evinced a ſpirit of energy and freedom, which might have done honor to the repreſentatives of any people. Far from conſenting to the king's requiſitions, they refuſed to grant the ſubſidies; and their language relative to the other propoſition, was ſtill more firm and inflexible. Undiſmayed by the apprehenſion of Henry's reſentment, Hemar, preſident of Bourdeaux, in the names of the three orders, declared, that "the domain of the "crown was ſacred and inalienable; that no caſe, however ex- "treme, could be ſtated, in which they could permit of its being "diminiſhed; that the ſovereign was only the poſſeſſor and tenant "during life; and that the nation being the proprietors, it was a "fundamental law of the ſtate, not to alienate the ſmalleſt part of "the domain." They not only reſiſted every artifice and blandiſhment of the court, which was exerted to ſhake their determination on this point; but, their remonſtrance operated ſo powerfully on the king, as to induce him to relinquiſh his intention,

Energy of the States.

They refuſe to permit the alienation of the royal domain.

and

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and prevented the further proſecution of his plan for ſelling crown lands to the amount of fifty thouſand crowns of annual revenue [26].

Submiſſion of the crown to the States, in 1588.

Although Henry could not vanquiſh the meritorious pertinacity of the States on theſe points, he ſtill retained, undiminiſhed, his own prerogatives: but, in 1588, when they met again at Blois, he held a very different language. Preſſed by difficulties; inſulted by the Guiſes, who had driven him from his capital, and diſgraced him in the eſtimation of all France; anxious to regain the confidence of his ſubjects, as the only means of triumphing over the powerful faction, by which he was beſet; he laid the unlimited powers of the crown, at the feet of the nation. All the abuſes, malverſations, and oppreſſions which had grown up by long preſcription, and which ſeemed to be inherent in the very eſſence of the monarchical authority, he voluntarily and ſpontaneouſly ſubjected to the cenſure of the national delegates. He offered to revoke all reverſions already conferred, without exception; and never to grant any in future. He referred to their wiſdom, the laws which reſpected trials, appeals, and the expences attending courts of judicature. He ſubmitted to them the ſtate of manufactures and commerce: allowed them to examine the finances, and to make whatever regulations they might think proper for their management and amelioration; concluding by an aſſurance, that he would ſo regulate his own houſehold in future, that it ſhould ſerve as a model to all his ſubjects for imitation. To render the laws which might be framed by the aſſembly, equally binding and permanent; he even condeſcended to become accountable, like the loweſt ſubject, for any infraction of them, under the penalty of treaſon; and conſented that they ſhould be tranſmitted to the various parliaments of the kingdom, to receive the moſt univerſal ſanction, as inviolable and unchangeable [27].

[26] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 450, and p. 474—477.

[27] De Thou, vol. x. p. 378—382.

It.

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It is difficult to imagine any conceſſions greater than theſe, or, on which it would have been more eaſy to have founded the baſis of a free conſtitution. Henry pointed it out to them, himſelf; and ſuch was his ſituation, that he muſt have yielded to any equitable propoſitions which the States had dictated. But, in that great body, conſiſting of near four hundred members, there was neither a ſpirit of patriotiſm, nor an enlarged comprehenſion of the ineſtimable advantages attached to civil liberty. Europe contained ſcarcely any model of a limited monarchy. Spain, England, and Italy, might be ſaid to obey princes, poſſeſſed of very extenſive and arbitrary power. In the aſſembly at Blois, the individuals compoſing the States, were either bigotted Catholics, bent on the extermination of the Hugonots; or violent and factious men, corrupted with the gold of Spain, and devoted to the ambitious views of the duke of Guiſe. That enterprizing chief, far from deſiring to emancipate the people, or to diminiſh the royal authority; only aſpired to become himſelf the depoſitory of it, and to reduce the king to the ſhadow of a ſovereign. The favorable moment for affixing legal barriers to the deſpotiſm of the crown, was loſt: Guiſe himſelf ſoon became the victim of his criminal projects; and Henry, liberated from his apprehenſions, laid aſide his diſpoſition to deſpoil himſelf of his power and prerogatives.

Magnitude of Henry's conceſſions.

Nature of the aſſembly at Blois.

The parliaments might be ſaid to form a ſecond bulwark againſt the tyranny and oppreſſions of the crown. At the cloſe of Henry the Second's reign, they amounted only to ſeven in number; and were, ſtrictly, no more than the ſupreme tribunals of civil and criminal judicature, throughout France. But, they poſſeſſed the advantage of being permanent; whereas the States were only convoked under circumſtances of national danger, for a limited and uncertain time. The parliament of Paris was, beſides, the organ and inſtrument, through which the edicts emanating from the throne, received the ſtamp of validity. It belonged to that venerable aſſembly to regiſter,

The parliaments.

Their privileges.

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regiſter, verify, and publiſh every pecuniary edict, or impoſition, laid by the ſovereign on the people. Though this privilege was originally intended for no other purpoſe, than to give greater ſolemnity and publicity to acts of ſtate; yet, it enabled the parliament to make frequent, and ſometimes effectual oppoſition to ſuch taxes, as were by them conſidered to be oppreſſive, or unjuſt. Many ſtriking examples of their patriotic and independant ſpirit, which occur under the reign of Henry the Third, ſufficiently prove, that virtue and freedom were not extinct among the French. In 1578, the king having ſent no leſs a number of edicts, inſtituting new contributions, than twenty-two, to be regiſtered; the parliament refuſed to ſanction them; and having ſelected ſome of the leaſt exceptionable, returned the others. All the menaces of Henry could not induce them to publiſh thoſe which appeared to be oppreſſive [28]. A ſtronger inſtance of the right to oppoſe ſuch acts of deſpotiſm, appears in 1581; when Birague, the chancellor, inſiſting on the immediate verification of nine new taxes; the firſt preſident of the parliament ſtood up in his place, and replied, in the collective names of his colleagues; that "according to the law of the king, which is his abſolute power, the "edicts might paſs; but, that, according to the law of the kingdom, "which is reaſon and equity, they could not, and ought not to be "publiſhed." Henry perſiſting, they forebore, however, from further oppoſition [29]. It became neceſſary for that prince to come in perſon, and hold a bed of juſtice, in order to ſurmount the impediments, which the parliament threw in the way of the taxes laid on by him, in 1583 and 1586; and it required the exertion of all the powers veſted in the crown, to enforce their promulgation [30]. None of his meaſures tended ſo much to render him univerſally odious, and to produce the defection which he experienced towards the cloſe of his reign, as theſe compulſory exertions of arbitrary authority [31].

Reſiſtance to the royal will.

Example of it.

[28] L'Etoile, p. 31 and 32.
[29] Ibid. p. 42 and 43.
[30] Ibid. p. 63 and 64, and p. 91. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 28 and 29.
[31] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729.

Beſides

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Beſides the States General and the Parliaments, there were other powerful obſtacles to the unlimited exerciſe of the prerogative. Many of the provinces enjoyed the right of holding their own ſtates, under the controul of the governor; and ſeem to have likewiſe poſſeſſed the faculty of laying on the particular taxes, requiſite for raiſing the ſums, demanded by the government[32]. To be convinced of the weight and influence of the provincial aſſemblies, in controuling the inordinate abuſe of the royal power, we need only peruſe the requeſt; or rather, the remonſtrance; for ſuch it may be juſtly termed; preſented to Henry, in 1578, by the States of Burgundy, aſſembled at Dijon. It contains ſo ſevere a ſatyre on his adminiſtration, and ſpeaks a language ſo nervous, bold, and independant, that we are aſtoniſhed at its having been offered, or received. The delegates who carried it to the foot of the throne, demanded the reduction of the antient taxes, and the abolition of the new ones recently impoſed: they recapitulated the many acts of prodigality committed by Henry; and deſired that commiſſioners might be named, to aſcertain the extent of his debts, to cancel ſuch as were improperly contracted, and to liquidate thoſe which were juſt, and well authenticated. They propoſed, that the money neceſſary to be levied for diſcharging the incumbrances of the king, ſhould be put into the hands of commiſſioners, and faithfully applied to the purpoſe for which it was deſtined.

Provincial ſtates.

Their manly and generous remonſtrances.

Far from reſenting a ſpeech ſo uncourtly, Henry condeſcended to endeavour to mollify the delegates; diſmiſſed them with many promiſes; and actually exempted the province of Burgundy from the payment of the new taxes[33]. It may be juſtly queſtioned, whether any houſe of commons, during the reign of Elizabeth, would have dared to offer a ſimilar remonſtrance to that princeſs; and we may boldly affirm, that notwithſtanding the apparent limits impoſed on her prerogative by the exiſtence of parliaments, ſhe was, in effect, as

[32] Montluc. Comman. vol. iv. p. 6. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 605—622.

[33] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 729—731.

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Inability of the crown to extort money, on many occaſions.

arbitrary as the kings of France of the ſixteenth century. In 1583, Henry made an experiment, which forcibly evinced the impotence of the royal authority, when applied to the pockets of his ſubjects. He ſent perſons of the firſt rank and conſideration, through the provinces, to expoſe to the people his wants, and to demand pecuniary aſſiſtance. They met every where with peremptory refuſals, accompanied by complaints and reproaches againſt the profuſion of the king[34].

Amount of the revenues.

It is difficult to ſtate with any degree of accuracy, the preciſe amount of the French revenue, under Henry the Third. The domain of the crown was ſtill very conſiderable; though it is certain that, before 1587, alienations had been made from it, notwithſtanding the remonſtrances of the States General, to the extent of ſixteen millions of livres, in value[35]. We may eſtimate that ſum as equal to ſeven hundred thouſand pounds ſterling. The ſale of the crown lands, which had remained untouched and undiminiſhed during near five centuries, from Hugh Capet to Louis the Eleventh; began under the reign of Charles the Eighth, when that prince, in 1494, commenced his invaſion of Naples[36]. Previous to the expulſion of the Engliſh from France, under Charles the Seventh, the French kings ſubſiſted principally on their domains. Grants of money were only made on urgent occaſions, for a limited time, which was uſually ſhort; and ſuch could only be accorded, or levied, by the conſent of the three orders of the States, who were ſolemnly convoked for the purpoſe. Strengthened by the acceſſion of power, which he received from the conqueſt of ſo many provinces occupied by the Engliſh; Charles the Seventh ventured to impoſe a permanent and annual taxation on his people. It was, nevertheleſs, aſſeſſed with ſuch moderation, that no reſiſtance was experienced from them; its whole amount not exceeding a million, eight hundred thouſand livres[37], or, about eighty-five thouſand pounds ſterling. But, under his ſuc-

[34] Buſbeq. letters 15 and 27. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 81.

[35] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 28.

[36] Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 430, 431.

[37] Ibid. p. 427, 428.

ceſſor,

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ceſſor, Louis the Eleventh, the taxes were raiſed to above four millions, ſeven hundred thouſand livres. Charles the Eighth, before his deceaſe in 1498, augmented them to more than five millions, eight hundred thouſand livres. Even in the following reign, under Louis the Twelfth, whoſe paternal affection for his ſubjects inclined him to diminiſh their burdens; the impoſitions continued rapidly to advance. He levied in 1514, ſeven millions, ſix hundred and fifty thouſand livres[38]. If a prince of ſuch œconomy and benevolence, was neceſſitated to encreaſe the taxes, it may be naturally ſuppoſed, that Francis the Firſt, profuſe, magnificent, and continually engaged in expenſive wars, could not fail to aggravate the evil. In fact, we find, that before the cloſe of his reign, in 1547, he had more than doubled the amount of the ſums levied by his predeceſſor. Francis raiſed them to fifteen millions, ſeven hundred thouſand livres[39]. Under Henry the Second, they were ſtill progreſſive[40]. But, a very conſiderable allowance muſt be made for the continual and rapid encreaſe in the price of all commodities, as well as for the diminution of the value of money, in conſequence of the diſcovery of America, between the year 1492, and 1560. It would be difficult to calculate, or eſtimate, the prodigious influx of gold and ſilver into Europe, after the commencement of the ſixteenth century.

In the year 1587, Henry the Third exacted thirty millions of livres, which were inſufficient to prevent his accumulating an enormous debt[41]. Francis the Firſt, at the time of his deceaſe, in 1547, had paid off every incumbrance, and left near five millions of livres in his coffers: but, at the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth, within fourteen years afterwards, the debts of the crown fell little ſhort of three millions, five hundred thouſand livres[42], or, one hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. They were encreaſed during his reign; and Ronſard, the poet, in his ſatyre of the "Dryade

Debts of the crown.

[38] Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 428.
[39] Id. ibid.
[40] Diſcours de la Noue, p. 359.
[41] About a million, two hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. Hiſt. des Troubles de France, p. 39.
[42] Traduction de l'Hoſpital, vol. ii. p. 19.

"violee,"

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"violeë," pathetically laments, that the neceſſities of the king had compelled him to ſell a great part of the foreſts of the Vendomois. Among theſe, was the wood of Gaſtine, which Ronſard had conſecrated to the muſes [43]. The civil wars, and the total miſmanagement, or neglect of the finances which followed, plunged the revenue into inextricable confuſion, and added greatly to the embarraſſments of the ſtate. Henry the Third, in 1579, made an attempt to enquire into the ſtate of the domain, lands, woods, waſtes, and other property of the crown, when he named commiſſioners to viſit the provinces of France. The recovery, amelioration, and augmentation of the revenue, was the firſt, and moſt important object of the deputation; and powers, almoſt deſpotic and unlimited, were conferred on the members [44]. How deplorable was the condition of the ſovereign, and how ruined were the finances at that period, we may learn, from Henry's expreſſions in the letters patent, or commiſſion, which he iſſued. He expreſsly enjoins the perſons deputed, to demand entrance into the aſſembly of the States, in ſuch provinces as enjoyed the privilege of governing themſelves by their repreſentatives. "You are then," continues the king, "to repreſent to them, "in the ſtrongeſt language poſſible, my neceſſities, ariſing from the "magnitude of the debts of the crown, incurred before my acceſ- "ſion. They are now ſo encreaſed, from the conſequences of the "civil wars, that all the domain is ſold and engaged; and almoſt "all the aids, taxes, and other revenues, are alienated. The remain- "ing receipts not being equal to one-third of the expences, indiſ- "penſable for the preſervation of the ſtate; I have been conſtrained, "of late years, to my great regret, to make many edicts and engage- "ments very injurious, in order to raiſe the neceſſary ſupplies for "the ſupport of my houſehold, and the offices of the kingdom [45]." It ſeems hardly poſſible to depicture a more calamitous ſtate of the

[43] Vie de Ronſard, p. 144.
[44] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 608—611.
[45] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 621, 622.

revenue.

revenue. If we compare it with the deficit, in 1787, at the time when Calonne, as ſuperintendant of the finances, adviſed Louis the Sixteenth to call together the "Notables," we ſhall ſee how infinitely the pecuniary embarraſſments of Henry the Third, exceeded thoſe of the late unfortunate and ill-fated ſovereign. CHAP. I.

Farmers general.

The pernicious practice of employing farmers, or partizans, as they were then called, in every department of the revenue, completed the ruin of the kingdom. It is difficult to conceive the extent and magnitude of this evil, which ſwallowed up all the reſources of France. In 1577, Henry the Third was ſo egregiouſly defrauded, that, from taxes which produced twelve millions of livres, only eight hundred thouſand ever entered the treaſury[46]. The greater part of the farmers were not natives, but, Florentines and Savoyards, who glutted themſelves with wealth, and uſually returned to ſpend it in their own country. Catherine of Medecis, herſelf an Italian, had contributed exceedingly to ſpread the diſorder, by employing foreigners, as receivers, or collectors of the revenue. So lucrative was the occupation, that people of all deſcriptions, noblemen, ladies, and members of the council, contrived to exerciſe it, and to participate in the general plunder[47]. They were multiplied under Henry the Third, to ſuch a degree, that Tavannes eſtimates them at thirty thouſand[48]. To render the calamity irremediable, they were accuſtomed to purchaſe of the king the new taxes, as ſoon as they came out, and to advance the money which it was calculated they might produce. But, as a recompenſe for prompt payment, the farmers ſeldom laid down more than a fourth, and often not a ſixth part of the ſum, levied by the impoſition on the people. We may ſee in the Memoirs of Sully, a liſt of the perſons who were concerned and intereſted in the tax upon ſalt, in 1585. The name of the ducheſs of Joyeuſe, ſiſter to

Their numbers.

Sale of taxes.

[46] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 197.
[47] Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 412.
[48] Tavannes, p. 313.

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Louiſa, wife of Henry the Third, is the firſt; and ſtands for no leſs a ſum, than ſeventy-five thouſand crowns. The aggregate amount of the money, thus advanced upon the mortgage of the duty on ſalt, exceeds a million, ſix hundred thouſand crowns [49]. Villeroi mentions as a fact well known, that two pecuniary edicts, obtained of Henry the Third by his favorites, were ſold immediately afterwards to the financiers, for the ſum of twelve thouſand, and twelve thouſand, five hundred crowns. The former produced fifty thouſand; and the latter, ſixty thouſand crowns [50].

Grants of taxes to the courtiers.

Such was the facility and criminal prodigality of Henry the Third, that he did not bluſh to create taxes, which were excluſively meant to enrich his minions and ſervants. "It was common," ſays Villeroi, "to ſee ladies, gentlemen, even valets, and perſons of the vileſt deſcription, ſhameleſsly purſuing the verification of edicts which they had obtained; ſoliciting their publication; recommending them as productive, and calling them *their* edicts [51]." Abuſes could hardly be carried to a more aſtoniſhing point of indecency and enormity. The treaſurers, who had the power of diſtributing, and apportioning the taxes, or impoſitions, throughout the kingdom, committed equal violations of juſtice. In order to ſpare ſome villages, of which they, or their immediate relations and friends, were the proprietors, they exacted unequal and ſevere contributions from others, to the oppreſſion of the inferior claſſes of people. Numbers of wretched peaſants, unable to pay the ſums thus demanded, were thrown into dungeons, and devoured by vermin, or conſumed by diſeaſe [52].

Inequality of their diſtribution.

Wealth of the financiers.

The prodigious fortunes, acquired by all thoſe who had, in any degree, the controul or management of the finances under Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, excite amazement and incredulity. Marſhal Coſſé, who was raiſed to the poſt of ſuperintendant,

Coſſé,

[49] Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 334.
[50] Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 413 and 414.
[51] Villeroi, vol. iv. p. 412.
[52] Ibid. p. 408 and 409.

by

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by the former of thoſe princes, contrived in the courſe of only one year, to diſcharge a hundred thouſand crowns which he was indebted, and to lay by fifty thouſand crowns in reſerve. His wife avowed the fact to Catherine of Medecis, in the midſt of the court[53]. Louis Adjacet, or Giacetti, a Florentine, and one of the contractors, or farmers general, amaſſed far greater wealth. He laid out a ſum adequate to ſixteen thouſand pounds of our money, for the caſtle and county of Chateau Vilain, in 1578, and married Mademoiſelle d'Atri, of an illuſtrious Neapolitan family, maid of honor to the queen-dowager. In addition to this landed property, he poſſeſſed rents or annuities, payable by the town-hall of Paris, to the amount of near forty thouſand livres, or about ſixteen hundred pounds ſterling, annually; and his furniture alone was eſtimated at an immenſe ſum. We may judge of the degree of intimacy and familiarity which ſubſiſted between him and Henry the Third, when we find that he frequently entertained the king at his own houſe, in the moſt ſumptuous manner; and that prince having ſeveral times ordered Adjacet to diſcharge a debt which he had incurred with a merchant, for pearls, to the amount of two thouſand crowns, the financier turned a deaf ear to the ſolicitation, and would not comply with Henry's requeſt[54]. Adjacet.

In 1589, Molan, one of the treaſurers of France, having quitted Paris when the party of the League took poſſeſſion of the capital, concealed his wealth by burying a conſiderable part of it under his houſe. He joined the king in Touraine; but, under pretence of poverty, he conſtantly refuſed to advance to that monarch, any ſum, however ſmall, notwithſtanding the ſtate of diſtreſs, to which the crown was reduced. In his houſe at Paris, after a long ſearch, were diſcovered above a million of livres in ſpecie[55]; which came moſt opportunely, to enable the duke of Mayenne to equip and pay his forces[56]. Molan.

[53] Brantome, vol. i. p. 189 and 190.

[54] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 99, and p. 131 and 132.

[55] About forty thouſand pounds.

[56] Memoires de Baſſompierre, vol. i. p. 18. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 274.

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Irritated at Molan's refuſal to aſſiſt him, when poſſeſſed of ſuch reſources, Henry cauſed him to be arreſted; and the unfortunate financier was glad to compound for his freedom and pardon, by the payment of fifteen thouſand crowns to the king [56].

Impunity of the financiers.

The alliances which the opulent contractors formed with the greateſt families in the kingdom, enſured their protection from reſearch and puniſhment. Very ample powers of inquiring, ſuſpending, and bringing to trial, all perſons who appeared to have defrauded the revenue, were entruſted to the commiſſioners, ſent in 1579, to diſcover abuſes. Collectors, controllers, receivers, and treaſurers, were rendered amenable to the tribunal, which inſtitution ſeemed to promiſe a beneficial change in the finances [57]. But, in 1585, Henry compounded at once with all the treaſurers of France, and gave them a complete abolition of their paſt malverſations, exactions, and oppreſſions. For this act of grace and oblivion, they preſented him with only a hundred and twenty thouſand crowns; a ſum very inadequate to the magnitude of their extortions, and which, at the ſame time, ſecured their future impunity. In order to levy the money, they impoſed a contribution on the individuals compoſing their body; and Henry's neceſſities induced him gladly to accept a temporary aid, at the price of the felicity and property of his ſubjects [58].

Practice of funding.

The practice of funding was not unknown in France, under Henry the Third. That prince had contracted a debt of near a million and a half of pounds ſterling, before the year 1577. Perſons were found, who voluntarily advanced him ſums of money, for which he gave them public ſecurity on the receipts of the revenue, or the domain [59]. He paid them ſixteen per cent. intereſt, and he even rejected the entreaties of the States, who exhorted him to break the contract,

[56] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 176. De Thou, vol. x. p. 605.

[57] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 608 and 609.

[58] Tavannes, p. 313. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 191.

[59] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 925.

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as uſurious. Henry was the more meritorious in thus adhering to his engagements, as Philip the Second, king of Spain, had given him a recent example of the infraction of pecuniary faith, in his treatment of the Genoeſe, to whom he was indebted [60]. Charles the Ninth borrowed money at twenty per cent. [61] Yet, under Francis the Firſt, a bank had been opened at Lyons, which lent money at only eight per cent. [62] During the reign of that monarch, annuities had been granted, payable by and at the town-hall of Paris, for which the king was ſecurity. They ſubſiſted under Henry the Third. Ten per cent. was the rate of intereſt paid to the holders, or lenders; and the majority of the inhabitants of the metropolis had ſcarcely any other property, or ſubſiſtance, independant of their labour and profeſſions, than that derived from the payment of the rents of the town-hall [63]. It was, therefore, a moſt ſerious calamity, when, on the king's being compelled, againſt his inclination, in 1585, to make war againſt the Hugonots, he ſuſpended the regular dividends, or payments [64]. In order to ingratiate himſelf with the Pariſians, the duke of Guiſe, in the courſe of the ſhort negotiation which took place between him and the king, before the flight of the latter from the Louvre, in 1588; expreſsly propoſed, as one of the articles of accommodation, that an aſſignment ſhould be made on Henry's part, to ſecure the conſtant and certain payments from the town-hall [65]. At the commencement of the war between the duke of Mayenne and Henry, in April, 1589, they were totally diſcontinued: but, ſuch was the frenzy of the time, and ſo great the deteſtation borne to the royal name and dignity, that all private loſſes or diſtreſſes were ſwallowed up and forgotten in the enthuſiaſm of rebellion [66].

Intereſt of money.

Life rents.

Suſpenſion of their payment.

[60] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 231.
[61] L'Art de Ver. vol. i. p. 653.
[62] Ibid. p. 640.
[63] De Thou, vol. x. p. 598. Davila, p. 571.
[64] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 336. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 907.
[65] Davila, p. 695.
[66] De Thou, vol. x. p. 598.

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Coin.

The coin of the kingdom, like every other inſtitution of civil government, was in a deplorable ſtate of confuſion or debaſement, during the reign of the two laſt princes of the houſe of Valois. In 1577, Henry the Third iſſued a celebrated edict, deſigned to regulate the value of the current money, and to reduce it nearly to its intrinſic weight. The cuſtom of eſtimating and reckoning by livres, an imaginary coin, was aboliſhed, on account of the inconveniencies ariſing from the fluctuation of its value. All effects were ordered to be eſtimated in ſales and contracts, by the ecu, or gold crown of three livres, which from the firſt day of January enſuing, was to be taken at ſixty ſous, or thirty pence. They had previouſly riſen to nearly double that value, and were circulated in the common mercantile intercourſe, at five, and even at ſix livres, in ſome places. This edict was productive of the moſt beneficial conſequences to commerce [67]. Previous to the acceſſion of Henry the Second, the effigy of the ſovereign was not engraven on the gold, or ſilver coin: but, in 1548, that prince cauſed it to be firſt ſubſtituted, inſtead of a croſs, which was more eaſily effaced. Soon afterwards, the year in which the piece of money was ſtruck; and the particular rank which the ſovereign held among thoſe of his own name, were added [68]. Ecus, and teſtons, were the common money of France; but, the doubloons and piſtoles of Spain were univerſally current [69].

Edicts relative to the current coin.

State of the military force, before the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt.

Before the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, in 1515, the French kings can ſcarcely be ſaid to have poſſeſſed any permanent, military force. The conqueſt of Naples, and the battle of Fornoua, under Charles the Eighth, were gained by the impetuoſity and valor of the cavalry, compoſed principally of nobility, who overbore the feeble and unwarlike Italians. Louis the Twelfth conquered the Milaneze, and beat the Venetians at Ghierra d'Adda, with troops formed upon ſimilar principles. But, when it became neceſſary to carry on war

[67] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 531 and 532.
[68] L'Art de Ver. vol. iii. p. 644.
[69] Brantome, vol. iii. p. 199 and 202. vol. iv. p. 29.

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for ſeveral campaigns, in Flanders, Italy, and Germany, againſt the veteran, and formidable Spaniſh bands of the emperor Charles the Fifth; a new ſyſtem was adopted. The infantry, which antecedently had been neglected and deſpiſed, roſe into conſideration; though the cavalry ſtill continued to be the favorite ſervice for the young nobility. Nothing could be more groteſque and ſavage than the dreſs and appearance of the antient foot ſoldiers, under Charles the Eighth, in 1495. They wore their hair long and floating on their ſhoulders, in order to encreaſe the fierceneſs of their aſpect; together with ſhirts, which had large hanging ſleeves, and which they continued to wear for ſeveral months, without waſhing. It was a diſtinctive mark of their profeſſion to go without ſtockings, or, at leaſt, with one leg bare. Even the officers and captains adhered to this badge of the infantry [70]. They commonly carried their ſtockings tied, or hanging at their girdles. As late as the time of Henry the Second, in 1552, when the foot ſoldiers were dreſſed and diſciplined in a much ſuperior manner; it was cuſtomary for the officers and private men to cut their ſtockings at the knee, when going to the aſſault of a town. As their dreſs from the waiſt to the ankle, conſiſted only of one piece, it facilitated their ſcaling a wall, or mounting a breach [71].

Infantry.

Their dreſs, and appearance.

Croſs-bows, with which the infantry were principally armed, till the cloſe of the fifteenth century, fell then into diſuſe; and the arquebuſs was ſubſtituted in their place, when powder became common: but, the French foot were, for a long time, far from attaining any dexterity in the uſe of fire-arms [72]. Under Louis the Twelfth, no intermediate military rank, or title between a captain and a general, was yet invented. Colonels and quarter-maſters were unknown. The famous chevalier Bayard commanded a thouſand foot in 1507, as a ſimple captain. But, eight years afterwards, in 1515, at the battle of Marignan, under Francis the Firſt, Claude, count of Guiſe, is ſaid to have commanded ſix thouſand German auxiliaries, as colonel.

Arms and weapons.

Military ranks.

Colonels.

[70] Brantome, vol. iv. p. 43—45.

[71] Ibid. p. 46.

[72] Brantome, vol. iv. p. 50.

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lonel[73]. It was not before the year 1542, at the ſiege of Perpignan, that the office of colonel began to be generally known. Briſſac was then created colonel of the French infantry[74].

Quarter-maſters.

Quarter-maſters were ſoon after inſtituted, in imitation of the Spaniards. Montluc was the firſt, in 1545, and the only one in all France, before the acceſſion of Henry the Second, in 1547; after which period, others were ſucceſſively named[75]. Charles the Ninth, or, rather, Catherine of Medecis, in 1562, divided the office, and created three quarter-maſters for the French infantry[76]. They ſeem to have remained at that number, under Henry the Third. The employment of colonel-general of the French infantry, originated towards the cloſe of the reign of Francis the Firſt; and the celebrated Gaſpard de Chatillon, better known as the admiral Coligny, was the ſecond who ever occupied the ſituation[77]. Even his enemies admitted, that to his wholeſome ſeverity, and excellent regulations, was due the diſcipline introduced among the foot. Before his appointment, they ſubſiſted by pillage, rapine, and every ſort of violence. To correct the evil, he made ſome terrible examples; and in 1552, when Henry the Second undertook the expedition againſt Metz, Toul, and Verdun, the trees were covered with ſoldiers, hung upon the branches for infraction of orders, and exceſſes committed upon the peaſants[78].

Colonel-general of the infantry.

Contempt of diſcipline.

But, the commencement of the civil wars, about ten years afterwards, was the term of their diſcipline; and it ſoon became impoſſible for either Catholics or Proteſtants to reſtrain the enormous depredations, murders, and profanations, committed by the ſoldiery[79]. Under Henry the Third, long habit had confirmed them, and rendered the evil almoſt irremediable.

Want of pay.

The principal cauſe, nevertheleſs, of theſe exceſſes, reſulted from the want of regular pay. During the whole of the ſixteenth cen-

[73] Brantome, vol. iv. p. 50—57.
[74] Ibid. p. 58.
[75] Ibid. p. 65 and 66.
[76] Ibid. p. 85—87.
[77] Brantome, vol. iv. p. 220.
[78] Ibid. p. 226.
[79] Diſcours de la Noue, p. 572—575, and p. 643. Brantome, vol. iv. p. 133, and 137.

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tury, and particularly, between 1560 and 1590, when the diſſentions of France impoveriſhed the crown, and exhauſted the treaſury, the army was frequently left unpaid for ſeveral months. The duke of Nevers ſeems to think, that ſoldiers who receive annually ten months pay, inſtead of twelve, have reaſon to be highly ſatisfied [80]. The officers were equally deprived of their appointments; and the wretched people became the victims of the incapacity of the ſovereign to maintain the national forces [81]. Even Philip the Second, though maſter of Peru, and poſſeſſing the treaſures of the New World, in addition to his vaſt revenues in Spain, Italy, and Flanders, left his troops continually in arrears; and ſaw the faireſt cities of the Netherlands deſolated, or pillaged by his own ſoldiers, driven to deſperation from the detention of their pay [82]. It cannot, therefore, excite wonder, that the kings of France ſhould be unable to defray the expence of the armies, which they were obliged to retain, in a time of univerſal inſurrection. How deplorable was the condition of the royal forces, employed againſt the Hugonots in Poitou, in December, 1588, we may ſee in the Memoirs of Nevers. "The men at arms," ſays he, "are not paid; and their ſufferings are extreme, from the rigour of "the ſeaſon. Proviſions, and even bread, are wanting. The greater "part of the infantry are without cloaths, ſhoes, or ſtockings; and "the men at arms ſay, that they are aſſembled for their own deſtruc-"tion, not for that of the Proteſtants [83]." To encreaſe the calamity, no proviſion or ſubſiſtence was allowed to the officers and ſoldiers, when age, wounds, and infirmities, had diſqualified them for active ſervice. Many, even among the former deſcription, at the ceſſation of a war, when a great proportion of the troops was diſbanded, either ſought foreign ſervice; or went over to the Turks, who gladly

Conſequences of it.

[80] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 196.
[81] Montluc's Comm. vol. iv. p. 185, and 311, and 312. Memoires de Caſtelmau, p. 240.
[82] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 368.
[83] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 874, 875.

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received them; or committed piracies on the ſeas; or, laſtly, embraced mechanical and mercantile profeſſions [84]. Theſe laſt were, however, conſidered as degrading, by ſuch a conduct, the honorable profeſſion of arms.

The cavalry.

The cavalry was a far more ſplendid, expenſive, and faſhionable ſervice than the infantry, during the ſixteenth century. All the young men of the court ſerved in it by preference, and frequently at their own expence. Their armor, dreſs, and accoutrements were uſually ſuperb. When Strozzi brought a troop of two hundred horſemen to Francis the Firſt, equipped, mounted, and provided entirely at his own coſt, they were the admiration of the French monarch. Their helmets and corſlets were gilt, and every man had two horſes. Strozzi expended twenty-five thouſand crowns in forming this body, which he long continued to maintain without any aſſiſtance from the crown [85]. During the reign of Henry the Second, when Savoy and Piemont were occupied by the French, that country was regarded as the ſchool for military education and improvement. The private ſoldiers became rich, by the plunder of the numerous towns and caſtles, captured from the enemy; and they laid out the money acquired by their valor, in decorations of every kind, ſuitable to their profeſſion. Fifty of them in one company had bonnets of red velvet, ornamented with gold; chains of the ſame metal round their necks, and velvet ſcarfs. A corporal, belonging to the colonel's own company, appeared at maſs, dreſſed in green ſattin, and having his drawers buttoned down to his ſhoes, with double ducats, angels, and nobles [86]. All theſe marks of opulence diſappeared after the beginning of the civil wars, which produced general poverty, relaxation of diſcipline, and diſſolution of manners, not only among the ſoldiery, but, through every rank of ſociety [87].

Their dreſs and armor.

Riches acquired by plunder.

[84] La Noue, p. 184.
[85] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 295—297.
[86] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 331.
[87] La Noue, p. 223.

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The arms, offenſive, and defenſive, uſed by the troops, underwent a conſiderable change, between the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt in 1515, and the death of Henry the Third, in 1589. Pikes, the antient weapon of the infantry, gave place to the arquebuſs: while, in the cavalry, lances were gradually and reluctantly changed for the piſtol. Tavannes, about the year 1567, contributed principally to the latter alteration [88]. Corſlets were, likewiſe, in a great meaſure, abandoned by the infantry under Charles the Ninth [89]. After the uſe of fire-arms became general, every part of defenſive armor was fabricated in a manner ſo maſſive, that it was impoſſible for the youngeſt, or moſt vigorous ſoldiers, long to ſuſtain its weight. Under Francis the Firſt, the oldeſt officers ſupported the fatigue of a whole day, completely armed: but, before 1580, it was accounted a great exertion to remain two hours in a coat of mail [90]. The art of deſtroying kept pace with the art of defending. Stuart, a Scottiſh gentleman, and a Hugonot, who is celebrated for having mortally wounded the conſtable Montmorenci; diſcovered a mode of fabricating balls of ſuch a compoſition, that ſcarcely any armor, however exquiſitely tempered, could reſiſt their force, when diſcharged from a piſtol. They were called "Stuardes," from the name of their inventor [91].

Change introduced in military weapons, and in defenſive armor.

At the famous judicial combat, or duel, between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye, fought in 1547, under Henry the Second, the defenſive arms were firſt delivered to the two combatants, and afterwards the offenſive weapons, with the utmoſt ſolemnity, in preſence of the king, the conſtable, and the whole court [92]. It excites aſtoniſhment, that under the preſſure of ſo vaſt a weight, they exerted ſuch agility and dexterity. Morions, or helmets, which were univerſally worn at that period, fell much into diſuſe, before the end

offenſive arms.

[88] Tavannes, p. 307. La Noue, p. 275. Montluc, vol. iv. p. 293.
[89] La Noue, p. 317.
[90] Ibid. p. 285 and 286.
[91] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 110.
[92] Le Laboureur ſur Caſtel, vol. ii. p. 557 and 558.

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of Henry the Third's reign [93]. The arquebuſs was the principal offenſive weapon, which decided the fate of battles in the ſixteenth century. D'Andelot firſt introduced them among the French infantry, about the middle of the reign of Henry the Second, on his return from Milan, where he had been detained during ſeveral years, a priſoner; and Strozzi, who became colonel-general of the infantry, in 1569, on D'Andelot's death, rendered them general. But, as the beſt were fabricated at Milan, it was long before a ſufficient number could be procured to arm all the foot ſoldiers [94]. Brantome expreſsly ſays, that the arquebuſs would kill, at the diſtance of four hundred paces [95]. They were gradually ſupplanted by the muſquet, which does not ſeem to have been known in France, before 1571, or the following year. To Strozzi was, in like manner, due their introduction; but, he found the utmoſt repugnance in effecting their reception among the troops. In order to overcome it, he himſelf, in 1573, at the ſiege of Rochelle, always had one carried by a page, or lacquey, wherever he went. His example ſoon vanquiſhed, in a conſiderable degree, the reluctance of his men; more eſpecially, when they ſaw him frequently kill even a horſe, at five hundred paces diſtant, with a muſquet [96]. Henry, duke of Guiſe, likewiſe, by conſtantly uſing the ſame weapon, facilitated its progreſs among the troops. The principal objection to them was their weight, which ſo fatigued the ſoldier, that, among the Spaniards, every muſqueteer was allowed a follower to carry it, during a march [97].

Arquebuſſes.

Muſquets.

The firſt inſtitution of guards, as diſtinct from the other forces, was due to Charles the Ninth, or to Catherine of Medecis, his mother; who, in 1563, formed one regiment, under the command of Charry, as quarter-maſter: they conſiſted of ten companies, and were, by the king's expreſs direction, taken from under

Guards. Their inſtitution.

[93] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 299.
[94] Ibid. p. 290—296.
[95] Ibid. p. 297.
[96] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 300.
[97] Ibid. p. 302—304.

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the controul or orders of the colonel-general of the infantry, in order to depend wholly and exclusively on the sovereign, whose body-guard they constituted [98]. In 1573, the same prince broke them; but, he issued directions to levy two companies anew, for his protection, in 1574; a short time before his decease [99]. We find, from the Memoirs of the duke of Nevers, that in 1577, Henry the Third kept in regular pay, twelve hundred Swiss guards, two hundred archers, and a hundred gentlemen of his household [100]. Yet, ten years afterwards, it appears, that there were only about three hundred men in the regiment of guards, which usually mounted at the palace of the Louvre, together with a few archers on horseback [101]. In order more effectually to secure himself against the enterprizes of the League, he had, before that time, created the famous band of forty-five; so denominated from the number of which it was composed. They were all gentlemen by birth, of approved valor, and mostly Gascons, recommended by the duke of Epernon. Henry never moved without them; gave them, each, a hundred crowns of gold monthly, besides other gratifications; and entrusted his person entirely to their fidelity. During the night, they always were stationed in the anti-chamber of his apartment; and by their hands the duke of Guise was finally immolated to the resentment of their master [102].

Band of forty-five.

During the course of the civil wars under the two last kings of the family of Valois, the nobility served, in a great measure, on both sides, either from loyalty, or zeal for their religion, or gratitude, or attachment to their respective leaders. Plunder supplied the want of regular pay, among the officers and men; who, inflamed by civil and religious animosity to a pitch of frenzy, were raised above considerations of a pecuniary and mercenary nature. On the side of

The nobility served from loyalty.

[98] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 90.
[99] Ibid. p. 103 and 104.
[100] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 189.
[101] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 652.
[102] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 283 and 284.

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Example of zeal and enthuſiaſm.

the Hugonots, incredible inſtances of this ſpirit might be adduced. We need only recollect the memorable one which took place in 1568, when the German auxiliaries came to the aſſiſtance of the prince of Condé. Thoſe ſtipendiaries refuſed to join the Proteſtant army, notwithſtanding the ſimilarity of their faith, till they had received payment of fifty thouſand crowns. The prince was deſtitute of money, and the greateſt Hugonot nobles in his camp, had the utmoſt difficulty to provide a miſerable, and precarious ſubſiſtance. In this extremity, Condé and Coligni having chearfully ſacrificed all their plate and jewels, the example was imitated by the officers and ſoldiers. Even the pages and lacqueys tore the ear-rings from their ears, to augment the general maſs; and a common footman had the incredible generoſity to contribute ten crowns. By this means, a ſum amounting to about four thouſand pounds ſterling, was raiſed, and immediately given to the Germans. No ſimilar act of diſintereſtedneſs and enthuſiaſm is to be found in the moſt ſhining periods of Greece and Rome [103].

Military ſervice, purely voluntary.

One natural, and neceſſary conſequence of the voluntary ſervice performed by the nobility in the field, was, that they quitted the army at pleaſure, and could never be retained long under the ſtandard. No entreaties, nor commands, were ſufficiently powerful to compel their ſtay, when fatigue, or buſineſs, or attention to their domeſtic concerns, called them to their caſtles. To cite proofs of this fact, would be to relate the hiſtory of every campaign. Even Inſtances of it. Coligni, whoſe aſcendant over the Proteſtants, after the prince of Condé's death at Jarnac, was ſuch as to approach to deſpotiſm; yet, could not cure an evil, inherent in the nature of the military profeſſion: nor was the effect of victory itſelf ſufficient to induce the conquerors to purſue their triumph. After the battle of Coutras, in 1587, gained by the king of Navarre over the duke of Joyeuſe;

[103] D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 227 and 228.

inſtead

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inſtead of profiting of ſo ſignal an advantage, that prince was inſtantly deſerted by all the nobility of Poitou and Saintonge, who formed the principal ſtrength of his forces. Far from marching, as he might be expected to have done, towards the Loire, he returned, the very next day, into Gaſcony [104].

Infraction of capitulations.

A melancholy effect of the rancour ſubſiſting between the Proteſtants and Catholics, during the courſe of the civil wars, was the continual infraction and ſhameleſs violation of the articles of capitulation, agreed on previous to the ſurrender of cities and garriſons. It would be endleſs to enumerate the examples of breach of faith, on both ſides. Sometimes, the commanders themſelves were either openly, or tacitly conſenting to the plunder and maſſacre of the very enemy, to whom they had, a few hours or minutes preceding, granted and ſolemnly promiſed honorable conditions. More frequently, the brutal, and vindictive fury of the ſoldiers, was not to be reſtrained by any exhortations or commands. Among the great military characters of that period, Biron diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his glorious and inflexible adherence to all his engagements with enemies, and by his puniſhment of the ſlighteſt infraction of agreement. He gave a ſhining proof of it, at the ſurrender of St. John d'Angely in Poitou, in 1569, when the Proteſtant troops having capitulated, were pillaged by the Catholics, on quitting the town. Biron was no ſooner informed of the outrage, than, drawing his ſword, and ruſhing into the midſt of his own men, who were occupied in plundering; he wounded numbers of them, and compelled the others to deſiſt immediately from ſo ſcandalous a breach of honor and faith [105].

Conduct of Biron.

Acts of atrocity and cruelty.

The deliberate murders, committed after the cloſe of battles, or ſieges, in that age, reflect greater diſhonor on the nation, as they were commonly perpetrated on defenceleſs men, wounded, diſarmed, and delivered over to the vengeance of ſome implacable, or vindictive individual.

[104] D'Aub. Hiſt. Gen. vol. iii. p. 58. De Thou, vol. x. p. 19.
[105] Brantome, vol. iii. p. 364.

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Prince of Condé.

vidual. Such muſt be eſteemed the murder of Louis, prince of Condé, at Jarnac, after he had preſented his gauntlet, and while he was actually ſitting on the ground, between his two ſureties [106]. A circumſtance which rendered it more atrocious, was, that Monteſquiou, who ſhot the prince through the head from behind, commanded the Swiſs guards of Henry, duke of Anjou, and neither received any puniſhment, nor even reprimand, for ſo odious a crime.

Stuart.

Stuart, who, at the battle of St. Denis, had killed the conſtable Montmorenci, being taken priſoner at Jarnac, was, in like manner, ſtabbed in cold blood, by the marquis of Villars, brother-in-law to the conſtable, as an offering to his manès. This act was performed almoſt in the preſence of the duke of Anjou, who expreſſed his reluctance, but, conſented, after ſome delay, to its commiſſion. Chatelier, another gentleman, made priſoner on the ſame day, was butchered by the friends of Charry, whom he had aſſaſſinated in Paris, ſome years preceding [107].

Retaliations.

In retaliation for theſe cruelties, the Proteſtants, on their part, immediately put to death two perſons of rank, the baron d'Ingrande, and Prune, who had fallen into their hands, by the chance of war [108].

Inſtances.

Carreliere, a Proteſtant gentleman, made priſoner at the engagement of Dreux, in 1562, was tied to a walnut-tree, and ſhot with piſtol balls, by the Catholic ſoldiery [109]. After the great victory of Montcontour, in 1569, many of the Hugonot priſoners were maſſacred from wanton barbarity, or revenge. La Noue, who was one of the captives, owed his life only to the interpoſition of the duke of Anjou [110]. Charbonniere, a private ſoldier, having ſhot the count de Briſſac, from the walls of Mucidan, during the progreſs of the ſiege; was, on the ſurrender of the place, ordered to be immediately hanged [111]. Richard the Firſt and Saladin could

[106] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 280.
[107] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 110
—112. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 280.
[108] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 113.
[109] D'Aub. vol. i. p. 170.
[110] La Noue, p. 689.
[111] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 418—420.

not

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not carry on war with greater inhumanity and ferocity. Even thoſe laws which have been eſteemed ſacred among nations the leaſt poliſhed, were trampled on in France, during the reigns of Henry the Third, and his predeceſſor. Tavannes declares, that, when he beſieged Auxonne, the inhabitants poiſoned the wells and fountains. Not content with contaminating the water, they ſent him a letter, dipped in the morbid matter of the plague, in order to ſpread the contagion in his camp [112]. The hiſtorians of that age contain many ſimilar atteſtations and inſtances of the moſt ferocious malignity. They contraſt wonderfully with the magnanimous clemency and humanity, which characteriſed the reign of Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second. The duke of Guiſe's beneficent treatment of the ſick and wounded ſoldiers of the emperor Charles the Fifth, after his repulſe before Metz in 1553, was more glorious than his preceding ſucceſs. During the civil wars, quarter was rarely given on either ſide.

Poiſon.

Uniforms were unknown among the troops in the ſixteenth century: the private men ſeem to have enjoyed the liberty of dreſſing, and arming themſelves, according to their capacity or fancy; but, the nobility were all diſtinguiſhed by their peculiar colours, during the civil wars. The Catholics wore crimſon jackets and ſcarfs: the Proteſtants were known by white ones [113]. They are frequently called "Les Caſaques blanches." Henry the Third, in 1587, gave grey uniforms to the Swiſs guard, in alluſion to the colour, which he wore, himſelf, as a penitent of the order of the Hieronomites. The long continuance of hoſtilities, and the precarious intervals of repoſe, between 1562 and 1589, had rendered the nation univerſally acquainted with, and familiarized to the uſe of arms. Even the peaſants, from neceſſity, more than choice, quitted the peaceable arts of huſbandry, and mixed in every fray. They were, unfortunately, victims to the rage of the ſoldiery, on many occaſions. Such was the fate of the Gautiers, in 1589. They

Familiarity with the uſe of arms.

Oppreſſion of the peaſants.

[112] Tavannes, p. 339.

[113] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 140, and p. 143.

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Gautiers.

were peaſants and labourers, who, driven to deſpair by the outrages of the royal forces, and by the ſeverity of the taxes; formed themſelves into a ſociety in Low Normandy, and were perſuaded to join the party of the League. Their numbers amounted to above ſixteen thouſand. We may judge to what a point of ferocity they had attained, and how much the oppreſſion which they experienced, had extinguiſhed in them all the emotions of humanity, by a circumſtance which De Thou commemorates. He ſays, that the Gautiers having made priſoner a royaliſt, who was occupied in pillage, they devoured him: no veſtige of his body was left; the women and children having drank the blood, while the men feaſted on the carcaſe [114]. The horde was ſoon attacked by the duke of Montpenſier, who put three thouſand to the ſword, after a fierce reſiſtance. Four hundred were ſent to labour on the public works; and the remainder, compelled to ſurrender at diſcretion, were allowed to return to their original occupation of tilling the earth [115].

Deſtruction of them.

Maſſacres of the peaſants.

After the defeat of Mouvans, a Hugonot commander, by Briſſac, in 1568; the peaſants of Perigord, in which province the action happened, cut in pieces a greater number of the fugitive Proteſtants, than had even fallen in the engagement. Coligni took an exemplary vengeance on them, for their attachment to the Catholics. Brantome declares, that in the caſtle of Chapelle Faucher, not a league from his own reſidence at Brantome, two hundred and ſixty were maſſacred in one room, by Coligni's expreſs orders; they had been detained a day in confinement, and the act was a deliberate one. He adds, that on his taking the liberty to remonſtrate with Coligni, becauſe the peaſants whom he had cauſed to be put to death, were not the ſame who had ſlaughtered the Proteſtants; he replied, that it was of no conſequence, ſince they were of the ſame province; and that the example would operate as a warning to their comrades [116].

[114] De Thou, vol. x. p. 600.

[115] Ibid. vol. x. p. 600—603. Davila, p. 796—799.

[116] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 225.

In

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In a country which had been ſo long the ſcene of war, it was not difficult to raiſe troops: every inhabitant of a village might be regarded as a ſoldier; and ſuch was the facility of levying them, that we find, in 1589, Thoré, brother to Henry de Montmorenci, procuring five hundred able and warlike peaſants, in the ſpace of a few hours. They were all vaſſals of the family and duchy of Montmorenci, and marched inſtantly to garriſon the city of Senlis, againſt the attack of the army of the League [117]. It is difficult to aſcertain the amount of the French military force under Henry the Third. In 1577, marſhal Coſſé, in the council of ſtate, aſſerted, that there were a hundred and fifty companies of men at arms in the kingdom, which, together with the archers, compoſed a body of twenty thouſand, three hundred, and ſixty-five men. "This army," ſaid he, "is ſufficiently numerous, to engage the largeſt foreign force, which ever "yet entered France." He, however, exhorts the king to form a ſeparate body of ſix thouſand Switzers [118]. The ſcience of fortification, in the modern acceptation of that term, was totally unknown in the ſixteenth century; and it was reſerved for the age of Louis the Fourteenth to re-model the Gothic towers and battlements of cities and caſtles. The moſt perfect production of the art, to be found in Europe, in the times of which we are treating, was the citadel of Antwerp, conſtructed by order of the duke of Alva, at an incredible expence. Metz was accounted the ſecond, and coſt above forty thouſand pounds ſterling. The citadel of Turin was eſtimated to have coſt near one hundred and fifty thouſand crowns [119].

Facility of raiſing troops.

Science of fortification.

Under Henry the Third, the uſe, and practice of artillery, was not advanced beyond its infancy. D'Etrees, who occupied the poſt of maſter-general of the ordnance in 1558, at the ſiege of Calais, by Francis, duke of Guiſe; and who eminently contributed to its capture, was the firſt perſon among the French, who made any conſiderable

Artillery.

[117] Le Labour. ſur Caſtel. vol. ii. p. 749.
[118] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 252.
[119] La Noue, p. 335.

 progreſs

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progreſs in the conſtruction of batteries. Anterior to D'Etrees, continual accidents took place, from the burſting of cannon; and it was cuſtomary to cool them with vinegar, in order to prevent thoſe misfortunes [120]. Armies were ſlenderly provided with artillery, which was conſidered as more requiſite for ſieges, than indiſpenſable in the operations of the field. In 1562, when Louis, prince of Condé, marched to inveſt Paris, he had only eight pieces of cannon, though his forces amounted to eight thouſand infantry, and five thouſand cavalry [121]. At the ſiege of Chartres, in 1568, by the ſame general, he poſſeſſed no more than five battering cannon, and four light culverins [122]. Even the duke of Anjou, commanding the royal army, which, in the ſubſequent year, gave battle to the Hugonots, and defeated them, at Jarnac, had only four cannon, and four culverins, with ſufficient ammunition to fire them between two and three hundred rounds [123]. Elizabeth, queen of England, ſent, as a moſt ample and acceptable ſupply of artillery, to the prince of Condé, a ſhort time preceding, ſix cannon, with powder and ammunition. It was done at the earneſt ſolicitation of cardinal Chatillon, the Hugonot embaſſador; and Condé, grateful for the preſent, but, unable to repay it in money, made a remittance to the queen, in bells, taken from the churches, and in wool [124].

Slender proviſion of that article, in armies.

Numerous examples:

In the army of Coligni.

When Coligni laid ſiege to Poitiers, a city ſeveral miles in circumference, and ſtrongly fortified, he had, in his whole camp, ſcarcely more than thirteen battering cannon, beſides culverins. His want of artillery was fatal to the ſucceſs of the enterprize [125]. At the memorable battle of Montcontour, the royaliſts were much ſuperior to their enemies in this reſpect. They had ſeventeen pieces

120 Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 223.
121 D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 163.
122 La Noue, p. 633.
123 Ibid. p. 670. Tavannes, p. 27.
124 Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 228.
125 La Noue, p. 681. Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 246.

of

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of cannon: Coligni, only ſix [126]. But, when that illuſtrious commander re-appeared at Arnai le Duc, in the enſuing year, 1570, and made an advantageous peace with Charles the Ninth, he was deſtitute of even a ſingle piece of artillery, of any ſize or deſcription [127]. Henry the Third, writing to his embaſſador in England in 1577, ſpeaks of the train of battering cannon, which the duke of Alenſon, his brother, conducted with him, at the head of the royal forces, as ſufficient to reduce any town to obedience. It conſiſted of eighteen cannon, and ſix large culverins [128]. We may judge of the uſual proportion of artillery furniſhed in that age, by the terms of agreement between Henry, prince of Condé, and the count palatine, John Caſimir, in 1575. It was ſtipulated, that to an army of eight thouſand Germans, and ſix thouſand Switzers, ſhould be joined four large pieces of cannon, and twelve field-pieces, with ſuitable ammunition [129]. Two years afterwards, in 1577, when the duke of Nevers exhorted Henry the Third to ſet on foot an army of ſix thouſand infantry, two thouſand, four hundred Switzers, and five hundred men at arms, beſides twelve hundred cavalry; he propoſed to join to that military force, as a juſt proportion of artillery, eight cannon, and twelve culverins [130]. Eight hundred, or a thouſand pioniers, were to be attached to the artillery. The monthly expence, including every article, ordinary and extraordinary, requiſite to maintain an army of ſuch magnitude, he eſtimates at only two hundred and fifty thouſand livres a month, or about one hundred and twenty thouſand pounds, a year. It is not without aſtoniſhment, that, at the battle of Coutras, in 1587, we find the duke of Joyeuſe had only two cannon. The Hugonots were ſuperior in artillery; for, they were maſters of two cannon and a culverin, which being placed on an eminence, did

Further proofs of the aſſertion.

[126] Memoires de Caſtelnau, p. 253. Tavannes, p. 356.—This latter author makes the diſparity leſs conſiderable: he ſays, that the royal army had fifteen cannon; the Hugonots, eleven.

[127] Mem. de Caſtel. p. 265. La Noue, p. 701.

[128] Le Labour. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 506.

[129] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 289.

[130] Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 189—191.

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ſignal ſervice, and contributed greatly to the victory obtained by the king of Navarre [131]. The largeſt battery of cannon, directed againſt any place, during the civil wars, ſeems to have been that which marſhal Matignon opened upon the town of St. Lo, in Normandy, in 1574. It conſiſted of eighteen cannon, and five great culverins [132]. But, Brantome ſays, that, the moſt furious, and well-ſuſtained fire ever remembered by the oldeſt officer, was kept up from thirty-ſix pieces of cannon, againſt Ivoy in Flanders, when Francis duke of Guiſe commanded the forces of Henry the Second, in 1552 [133].

Petards.

To the period of the civil wars, is due the invention of petards. They were firſt uſed by the Hugonots, in 1580, at the ſiege of Cahors, in Quercy; and they produced an effect proportionate to their novelty and violence [134]. Montelimar, and Embrun in Dauphiné, were taken by Leſdiguieres, in 1585, principally by means of petards [135]. Red-hot balls, which have been revived ſince 1782, at Gibraltar, were uſed by marſhal Matignon, during the ſiege of La Fere, in 1580 [136].

Ranſoms.

Ranſoms formed a very ſerious and lucrative object of attention, in that age. To the captors, they proved the means of enriching themſelves and their families: the captured were frequently impoveriſhed and exhauſted, by the neceſſity of raiſing large ſums, to procure their freedom. The prodigious prices, ſet on the enlargement of perſons of eminence, excite aſtoniſhment. At the ſtorm of Terouenne by the troops of Charles the Fifth, in 1553, Francis de Montmorenci, eldeſt ſon of the conſtable, was made priſoner on the breach. Twenty-five thouſand crowns were exacted for his releaſe [137]. The liberty of Gabriel de Montmorenci, fourth ſon to the conſtable, taken captive at the age of fourteen, in the battle of

Their vaſt amount.

[131] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 52. Sully, vol. i. p. 59.

[132] Letter of Cath. of Medecis, in the third vol. of Le Lab. ſur Caſt. p. 411.

[133] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Etrang. p. 265 and 266.

[134] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 376.

[135] Ibid. vol. ix. p. 404 and 405.

[136] Pere Daniel, cited in L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 655.

[137] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 350.

St.

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St. Quintin, was fixed at ten thouſand crowns [138]; and that of the duke of Longueville, at forty thouſand [139]. Lord Grey, who commanded in the caſtle of Guiſnes near Calais, when it fell into the hands of the French, in 1558, was given to marſhal Tavannes, to recompenſe him for his exertions in the capture of the place. He carried his priſoner to Dijon in Burgundy, and did not releaſe him till lord Grey had paid five thouſand crowns [140]. Brantome complains, that his family eſtate had been very conſiderably diminiſhed by the neceſſity of ranſoming his elder brother, taken by the Spaniards, at Heſdin, in Picardy, in 1553 [141]. When we reflect, that private gentlemen ſerved, in a great meaſure, at their own expence, or on a very precarious pay; and that, in caſe of being made priſoners, they were reduced to purchaſe their freedom by the ſale of their property; we muſt allow, that a very high ſenſe of loyalty and honor exiſted among that body of men. It cannot excite ſurprize, that the profeſſion of arms was conſidered as more honorable than any other. The officers of high rank, taken in war, belonged always to the commander in chief, as of right: inferior perſons were retained by thoſe, into whoſe hands they chanced to fall. Common ſoldiers frequently grew rich by theſe prizes. It was even cuſtomary for the general to purchaſe priſoners of his own men, at low ſums; and afterwards to ſet their ranſoms at very exorbitant ones. Philibert Emanuel, duke of Savoy, commanding the armies of Philip the Second, king of Spain, did not diſdain this ſpecies of traffic; and he acquired, not only glory, but, profit, by his celebrated victory at St. Quintin, where ſo many illuſtrious captives fell into his poſſeſſion [142].

Impoveriſhment, cauſed by them.

Profit, derived from ranſoms.

[138] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 85.

[139] Ibid. p. 656.

[140] Tavannes, p. 203.—This fact cannot reaſonably be doubted, ſince Tavannes relates it himſelf. It is, however, very ſingular, that Brantome expreſsly declares, that lord Grey was given by the duke of Guiſe, to Strozzi; who obtained only four thouſand crowns for his releaſe, which were paid him by the count de la Rochefoucault, who had been made priſoner at the battle of St. Quintin, and whoſe ranſom had been fixed at that ſum. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 298.

[141] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 157 and 158.

[142] Id. ibid.

A ſtriking

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A ſtriking proof, and which places in a conſpicuous point of view, the manners of the age, relative to captives, taken in war, is to be found in the writings of Ambroſe Paré. Monſieur de Baugé, ſays he, brother to the count de Martigues, had been made priſoner by two Spaniſh ſoldiers, at Terouenne, in 1553. Vaudeville, governor of Gravelines, having ſeen him, conceived an opinion, that he was a man of rank. To ſatisfy himſelf on a point of ſuch importance, he cauſed Baugé's ſtockings to be taken off; and remarking that his ſocks were neat, and his feet extremely clean, he became confirmed in his original apprehenſion. He, therefore, purchaſed him of the two ſoldiers, for fifteen crowns; who, being unable to maintain their priſoner, and ignorant of his quality, gladly accepted the ſum offered. Baugé ſtudiouſly concealed his name and condition, and patiently endured every hardſhip; ſleeping on ſtraw, and ſubſiſting on bread and water. Vaudeville ſoon afterwards tranſmitted to him a liſt of the French killed at the capture of Heſdin by the Spaniards; and on reading his brother's name among them, his grief ſurmounted his prudence. He burſt into involuntary tears and exclamations, which were heard by his guards; who no ſooner diſcovered the connexion between him and the count de Martigues, than they apprized Vaudeville of the value of his prize. By order of that officer, Baugé was immediately removed to an apartment hung with tapeſtry; he was ſerved with delicacy, and ſeven thouſand, five hundred crowns were demanded for his ranſom. On his pleading inability to raiſe ſo conſiderable a ſum, Vaudeville obſerved, that it was poſſible he might not procure his freedom at a price ſo reaſonable; and the event juſtified the prediction. Mary, queen of Hungary, governeſs of the Low Countries, and the duke of Savoy, having been informed that a perſon of his quality was in Vaudeville's poſſeſſion, they diſpatched a meſſenger to him, to command that Baugé ſhould be forthwith delivered up to them; adding, that the morſel was too large for him, and that he had captives ſufficient beſides. Baugé's ranſom was immediately raiſed to twenty thouſand crowns [143].

[143] Œuvres de Paré, p. 791.

Fre-

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Frequently, animoſity, or revenge, more powerful even than intereſt, induced the captors to put to death on the ſpot, an enemy, who was obnoxious, though he offered great ranſom. This circumſtance was peculiarly characteriſtic of the civil wars, when mutual rancour had extinguiſhed humanity, and even ſuſpended the love of gold itſelf. At Coutras, though the duke of Joyeuſe offered fifty thouſand crowns for his life, and threw down his ſword, he was ſhot dead immediately [144]. The king of Navarre gained univerſal applauſe and popularity on that occaſion, by diſmiſſing the greater part of the Catholic gentlemen, who fell into his hands, without exacting, or accepting any ranſom [145]. Such acts of renunciation and generoſity were, by no means, common. The cruelties, exerciſed by the Spaniards, when they captured Heſdin, in 1553, in order to extort ranſoms, can neither be peruſed without commiſeration, nor related without wounding decency. The enormity of their conduct was greatly augmented, by the violation of the terms of ſurrender, which guaranteed to the French their lives. But, no articles of capitulation could reſtrain the ferocity, and mercileſs avidity of the Spaniſh ſoldiery. Thoſe whom they did not ſtab, or maſſacre, were only reſerved for more humiliating and lingering torments, of a nature too ſhocking to be deſcribed. Paré, who was an eye-witneſs to the facts, and who narrowly eſcaped with his life and liberty, gives a moſt affecting detail of every circumſtance. It ſtrongly paints the inveterate animoſity, and ſavage fury, by which the moſt poliſhed European nations, when at war with each other, were actuated and inflamed, in the ſixteenth century [146].

Animoſity of the civil wars.

Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, during their foreign wars, maintained very numerous armies, on a permanent footing. But, under the two laſt kings of the houſe of Valois, when the revenues were alienated or ſquandered, and when civil diſſenſion depreſſed the throne, forces were only raiſed, and retained for a ſhort

Nature and compoſition of armies, in that century.

[144] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. iii. p. 56.
[145] Ibid. p. 56 and 57.
[146] Œuvres de Paré, p. 791.

time.

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time. The whole kingdom was in arms; but, the regular troops were few. The nobility led their retainers to the particular ſtandard, which they choſe to follow by preference. It became, under Henry the Third, an object of royal and miniſterial contemplation, to change the nature of military ſervice, and to commute, for a ſum of money, the obligation, impoſed on the vaſſal to attend his lord armed in the field. The duke of Nevers calculates, that by excuſing all the holders of fiefs, who were bound on the publication of the "Arriere Ban," throughout France, to appear in arms, on paying an equitable fine to the crown, above twenty thouſand pounds might be eaſily and ſpeedily raiſed [147]. Foreign auxiliaries from almoſt all the countries of Europe, compoſed a principal part of the ſoldiers on either ſide. Italians, Walloons, Spaniards, Switzers, Engliſh, and Germans, fought for one, or the other party. Even the Scots were deſirous of taſting the pay, and plunder of France. In 1577, eighteen hundred Scots, who had ſerved in Holland, and in Denmark, anxious for employment, offered their ſervices to Henry the Third. James the Sixth, then a minor, does not ſeem, either by himſelf, or by his miniſters, to have been acquainted with, or conſulted in the tranſaction. Colonel Balfour, on the part of himſelf and his men, made the offer to Henry. That prince declined it, not without many acknowledgments [148].

Army of Henry the Third, how compoſed.

The largeſt army, ſeen during his reign, in France, was in 1589, when he beſieged Paris, with near forty thouſand troops. Of the number, fourteen thouſand were Switzers and Germans, conducted by Sancy. Near four thouſand, principally Proteſtants, were commanded by, and in the immediate employ of the king of Navarre. Epernon had brought to his maſter, a body of ſix thouſand foot, and twelve hundred horſe, raiſed at his own expence [149]. The dukes of Montpenſier, and Longueville, Givry, and many other noblemen, or gentlemen, led their retainers [150]. But, this numerous body of forces, was

[147] Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 193, and 194.
[148] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 512.
[149] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 322.
[150] Davila, p. 813.

not

not belonging to the crown: no ſooner was Henry dead, than the greater part immediately diſbanded, or withdrew, under their reſpective leaders; leaving the king of Navarre to conteſt alone with his antagoniſt, the duke of Mayenne, for the ſovereignty of France. We may judge how deſtitute was Henry the Third of any regular army, by his ſummoning, in the month of March preceding, the principal lords and gentlemen of his kingdom, to the number of one hundred and two, to join him, at the head of their troops [151]. CHAP. I.

Naval force. Gallies.

The French kings can ſcarcely be ſaid to have poſſeſſed any navy, before the reign of Francis the Firſt; the gallies of Louis the Twelfth, which were ſtationed at Marſeilles, being only calculated for the protection of the coaſt, or for expeditions of ſhort duration. During the former part of Francis's reign, while the celebrated Andrew Doria commanded the marine, at the time that Genoa was ſubject to the French crown; they maintained a ſuperiority in the Mediterranean, over the naval forces of the emperor Charles the Fifth. But, after the defection of Doria, and the revolt of Genoa in 1528, Francis having loſt his aſcendant, had recourſe to an expedient, which rendered him odious to all Europe. He diſpatched Poulin, a man who had riſen by his merit and capacity in the marine, as embaſſador to Solyman the Second, emperor of the Turks, to negotiate for the junction of the Ottoman fleet with that of France. After ſurmounting many obſtacles, Poulin ſucceeded in the object of his miſſion. Barbaroſſa, in 1543, at the head of a hundred and ten gallies, coaſted the ſhore of Italy; arrived in the harbour of Marſeilles; and having ſailed from thence with the French fleet and forces, they laid ſiege to Nice. Notwithſtanding their ſuperiority, they were repulſed from before the caſtle; and Francis derived little benefit from an alliance ſo generally reprobated by the Chriſtian powers [152]. To recompenſe the zeal and

Negotiation of Poulin, at the Porte.

Barbaroſſa joins the French fleet.

[151] De Thou, vol. x. p. 577.

[152] Guichenon, Hiſt. de Savoye, vol. i. p. 651.

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Creation of a captain-general of the gallies.

ability of Poulin, he was raiſed, in the following year, to the rank of captain-general of the gallies; and he is commonly known in hiſtory, by the title of baron de la Garde. In the letters patent, iſſued on the occaſion, the French navy is ſtated to conſiſt of "gallies, "fuſts, brigantines, and round veſſels [153]." It is difficult to aſcertain with certainty, their number, or force; but, we may rate the gallies below thirty, as only twenty-ſix, under command of the count d'Enghuien, joined Barbaroſſa in the expedition againſt Nice, when every effort was exerted to ſwell the French marine [154].

Nautical ſkill and exploits of Poulin.

The war continuing between Francis the Firſt and Henry the Eighth, La Garde conducted the fleet, compoſed of gallies and round veſſels, through the ſtraits of Gibraltar, acroſs the Bay of Biſcay, into the Engliſh channel. He even ventured to attack, in the month of Auguſt, 1545, the Engliſh fleet, ſtationed off the Iſle of Wight; and, having, by the nautical ſkill of his evolutions, deprived them of the advantage reſulting from a northerly wind, he extricated himſelf with honor, and ſunk one of the largeſt ſhips of the enemy [155]. It is probable that this was the firſt attempt made by any European power, to navigate gallies from the Mediterranean, acroſs a portion of the Atlantic, into the northern ſeas; and it proves equally the progreſs of navigation, and the naval ability of the French commander. Encouraged by his predeceſſor's ſucceſs, Henry the Second, ſoon after his acceſſion, in 1547, diſpatched Leo Strozzi, one of the moſt ſkilful mariners of the ſixteenth century, with only ten gallies, to the coaſt of Scotland [156].

State of the French marine, under Henry the Second.

The French marine was at its higheſt point, towards the termination of that monarch's reign; when, the grand prior, brother to Francis, duke of Guiſe, commanded at one time, upwards of forty gallies, well

[153] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 10.
[154] Guichenon, vol. i. p. 651.
[155] Hume's Hiſt. of England, vol. iv. p. 250. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 12.
[156] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 357 and 358.

manned,

manned, armed, and equipped for battle [157]. Under the three laſt princes of Valois, as the inteſtine troubles of the kingdom augmented, the navy ſunk, into neglect. Francis the Second, it is true, ſent ſome gallies to the aid of Mary of Guiſe, queen regent of Scotland, in 1560; and three years afterwards, Charles the Ninth diſpatched fifteen, to co-operate with the Spaniſh forces of Philip the Second, in the reduction of the Mooriſh fortreſs of Penon de Velez, on the coaſt of Morocco [158]. But, theſe exertions were only temporary; and the French marine, in common with every other national, or public inſtitution, declined, from the exhauſted ſtate of the revenues. When it became requiſite, in 1572, to block up the port of Rochelle, in order to prevent ſupplies from being thrown into the place, while it was inveſted by land; the king, beſide ſending thither all his gallies, equipped eight "round veſſels [159]." They were ſo denominated from their circular conſtruction forwards, in contra-diſtinction to the gallies, and other prowed veſſels, which were ſharp in the ſtern.

Its decline under his ſucceſſors.

Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, fitted out, at different times, during the courſe of their reigns, ſquadrons of armed ſhips, for the protection of trade; particularly, in the Engliſh channel, which ſwarmed with pirates, or unauthorized and expatriated banditti, who plundered and interrupted all navigation. Elizabeth appears to have afforded them conſtant, though indirect, and concealed protection [160]. In 1575, Henry the Third equipped, from the ports of Normandy and Brittany, twelve ſhips, for the purpoſes abovementioned; but, he did it with every precaution, to prevent the alarm which, he apprehended, the queen of England might take, at ſuch a meaſure [161]. When the duke of Mayenne beſieged Brouage, on the coaſt of Poitou, in 1577, the royal forces by ſea amounted to

Equipment of ſquadrons for the protection of trade.

[157] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 396 and 397.

[158] Ibid. Cap. Etran. p. 36 and 37.

[159] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 267.

[160] Ibid. p. 299, and p. 390.

[161] Ibid. p. 458.

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eighteen round veſſels, excluſive of the gallies, and tenders, or victuallers. The ſhips of war were fitted out from Bourdeaux [162]. But, the moſt conſiderable naval equipment, made by Henry, or, rather, by Catherine of Medecis, in whoſe name it acted; was the fleet which ſailed to the iſlands of the Azores, in 1582, for the purpoſe of reducing them to the obedience of Don Antonio, titular king of Portugal. It quitted the river Garonne, under the command of Philip Strozzi, and conſiſted of thirty ſhips, and twenty-five pataches [163]. No French gallies durſt undertake ſo diſtant, and perilous a voyage upon the Atlantic: while, as a proof of the ſuperior nautical ſkill of the Spaniards in that age, the marquis of Santa Croce had, in his fleet, no leſs than twelve gallies. It was certainly the firſt effort of the ſort; and would be regarded, even in the preſent age, when navigation has attained to ſuch a degree of perfection, as a bold and hazardous experiment [164]. The diſparity between the naval force of France and Spain, is not leſs ſtriking. Santa Croce commanded twenty large ſhips, of which the "St. Philip" alone might have encountered the whole fleet of Strozzi. She was a floating caſtle, of aſtoniſhing height, and eighteen hundred tons burthen; proportionably manned and armed. The largeſt veſſel in Strozzi's ſquadron, on board of which he hoiſted his flag, was only of ſix hundred tons; and he was obliged to quit her before he commenced the engagement with the Spaniards, as ſhe was a very ſlow ſailer, and unmanageable. The ſecond ſhip, in which he actually ventured to attack the "St. Philip," was only of two hundred tons. Another difference, ſtill more important, if poſſible, between the fleets of the two nations, was, that Philip the Second's veſſels were all, in the ſtrict ſenſe of the term, men of war, built in the royal docks, at Seville; whereas, it would ſeem, that the far greater part of

Expedition to the Azores.

Superior naval ſkill of the Spaniards.

Compariſon of the fleets of the two nations.

[162] D'Aub. vol. ii. p. 300. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 511. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 512.

[163] D'Aub. vol. ii. p. 466. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 581.

[164] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 581.

Henry's,

Henry's, were merchant veſſels, hired expreſsly for the expedition [165]. We can hardly be aſtoniſhed, after conſidering theſe circumſtances, that the iſſue of the enterprize was unfortunate to the French. It is difficult to form any eſtimate of the number of ſailors who navigated Strozzi's fleet; or, of the amount of ſeamen which France could furniſh in that age.

Juriſdiction of the general of the gallies.

The appointment of general of the gallies was equally honorable and extenſive in its juriſdiction, though ſubordinate to the higher dignity of admiral of France: but, the latter was frequently only a ſimple title; whereas the former was a laborious, dangerous, and efficient office. He appears to have poſſeſſed conſiderable power, and to have decided by his ſupreme authority, in a ſummary manner, all queſtions reſpecting prizes and captures [166]. The ſalary annexed to the employment by Francis the Firſt, was ample; being no leſs than five hundred livres, or above twenty pounds, a month [167]. Such was the elevation of mind, which diſtinguiſhed the baron de la Garde, that, when at eighty years of age, and laboring under the ſymptoms of a mortal and incurable diſeaſe, Catherine of Medecis offered him the ſum of fifty thouſand crowns to reſign his poſt, he had the magnanimity to decline it, and to prefer dying captain-general of the gallies. His death was correſpondent to his other actions: the phyſicians having announced to him his diſſolution as imminent and inevitable, he cauſed himſelf to be raiſed, placed in a chair, with his ſword drawn in his hand, and ſoon afterwards expired in that attitude. The obſcurity of his birth and origin rendered the heroiſm of his character more extraordinary. His parentage was ſo low, and ſo uncertain, as to baffle enquiry [168].

Salary.

Heroiſm of Poulin.

Durability of the gallies.

To La Garde was due the honor of ſome eſſential improvements and ameliorations in the mode of building and navigating gallies.

[165] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 466—468.

[166] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 387.

[167] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 11—13.

[168] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 387 and 388.

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We may judge of their materials and durability, from the inſtance of the "Reale," or admiral galley, conſtructed by him, which continued to keep the ſea above thirty years[169]. The greateſt magnificence was diſplayed by the captains-general, in the decorations, ornaments, and other appendages of their veſſels. The examples given by contemporary writers, and eye-witneſſes, excite admiration. When, in 1573, a negotiation of marriage was opened between Elizabeth, queen of England, and the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third; it advanced ſo far, that orders were iſſued to hold the gallies in readineſs for tranſporting the prince to London. They were at that time before Rochelle, occupied in blocking up the harbour of the place. On receiving the intimation, La Garde made every preparation for convoying the duke, in a manner ſuitable to his high rank, and to the ſplendor of the occaſion. He is ſaid to have expended ten thouſand crowns of his own fortune, in fitting up the admiral galley. All the ſlaves, who rowed her, were provided with jackets of crimſon velvet, to be worne on their entry into the Thames. The ſtate-room, or great cabbin, and the poop of the galley itſelf, were hung with the ſame materials, embroidered in gold and ſilver, having a Greek motto or device on the awning, which ſignified, that "however blown about and agitated, I have never "fallen, nor changed." The alluſion was natural and obvious, to the fidelity and loyalty, evinced by La Garde, during a long life, checquered by many misfortunes and diſgraces. The beds, furniture, benches, ſtreamers, and flags, were either covered with, or compoſed of velvet and damaſk in equal proportions, fringed with gold, or ſilver. All theſe ſuperb preparations were rendered uſeleſs, by the rupture of the propoſed marriage[170].

Their magnificence.

Splendor of the admiral galley.

[169] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 384.

[170] Ibid. p. 385—387.

Individuals

CHAP. I.

Naval expeditions fitted out by private individuals.

Individuals appear to have poſſeſſed and exerciſed, in the ſixteenth century, the right of fitting out, in time of peace, naval expeditions, at their own coſt, without any leave obtained from the ſovereign; and the object of which was either trade, or conqueſt, as accident and circumſtances might determine. The only meaſure requiſite to be obſerved, was, not to attack allies or confederates of the crown, to which the adventurer owned allegiance. Henry the Third ſeems to acknowledge and admit this principle in all its extent, as equally juſt and generally recognized [171]. Under Charles the Ninth's reign, a ſon of marſhal Montluc, having heard that great wealth was to be acquired on the coaſt of Africa, between Cape Blanco and the Cape of Good Hope; determined to ſhare in theſe ſuppoſed riches. Regardleſs either of the papal donation, or, of the long poſſeſſion acquired by the Portugueze; he publickly equipped two veſſels in the river Adour, employed ſix months in compleating their compliment of men, and ſailed from Bourdeaux. Arriving at Madeira, and being refuſed refreſhments by the governor, who had received intimation from his court, of the deſign of Montluc; the French landed, attacked, and carried the works; but, their commander being killed, they quitted the iſland. Great complaints were made by the Portugueze embaſſador at Paris, of this infraction of treaty [172]. La Noue expreſsly ſays, that the piratical expeditions, undertaken by Frenchmen annually to the coaſt of Peru, did not drain the nation of a ſmaller number, than five hundred ſubjects a year [173].

Enterprize of Montluc.

Piracies.

Fire-ſhips were well known, and frequently uſed, under Henry the Third. Frederic Jembelli, an engineer, whom the Spaniards had diſguſted, threw himſelf into Antwerp, when beſieged by the prince of Parma, in 1584; and gave ſignal proofs of his capacity, by ſending down the Schelde, ſeveral fire-ſhips of prodigious magnitude. They had nearly demoliſhed the bridge, or mole, conſtructed by that

Fire-ſhips.

Their invention.

[171] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 524.

[172] D'Aub. vol. i. p. 247 and 248. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 256—258.

[173] La Noue, p. 182.

great

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great commander, acroſs the river, and on which he repoſed all his hopes of ſucceſs. Jembelli is regarded as their inventor [174]: it is, however, inconteſtable, that they were uſed by the Hugonots, ſeveral years earlier, in 1577, at the ſiege of Brouage, in Poitou. Clermont d'Amboiſe, who commanded the fleet of Rochelle, ſent four fire-ſhips, to burn the royal ſquadron. De Thou very accurately deſcribes their nature and deſtination [175]. We find no mention of them among the Engliſh, before the invaſion of the Spaniſh Armada in 1588, when they performed ſuch ſignal execution.

[174] Buſbeq. de Bong. p. 242. [175] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 518.

CHAP. II.

State of commerce, and navigation.—Bankers.—Attempts at coloniza-tion.—Manufactures.—Sumptuary laws.—Agriculture.—Condition of the peaſants.—Oppreſſion of the inferior orders of ſociety.—Popu-lation.—State of Paris.—The Louvre.—Public edifices.—Courts of law, and of criminal judicature.—Venality of offices.—Corruption of juſtice.—Confiſcation.—Torture.—Puniſhments and executions.—Sale of honors and dignities.

CHAP. II.

State of the French commerce.

IT is, by no means, eaſy, from the moſt accurate and laborious compariſon of the materials, left us by the contemporary authors, to form any clear, or perfect idea of the preciſe ſtate of the French commerce under the laſt princes of the race of Valois. The information on that point, is uſually ſhort, obſcure, and unſatisfactory; while, on ſubjects of far inferior importance, they frequently embrace a vaſt detail. We may, however, ſafely aſſert, that the true principles of trade were, at that period, little underſtood, or ſtudied, either by men of ſpeculative reſearch, or by ſtateſmen and financiers. A very precarious protection was extended by the ſtate, to the merchant adventurer: navigation was dangerous, not only from the want of charts, which might direct the mariner; but from the number of pirates, with which the Mediterranean and the other European ſeas were infeſted. Ships were, beſides, liable to detention, and even to confiſcation, either from the rapacious ſpirit of the government, or from the impolitic and pernicious regulations, adopted in various countries, with a view to draw unreaſonable advantages from the affluence of foreign traders. Monopolies, or excluſive privileges, granted by the French kings, to favoured individuals, fettered, and oppreſſed the

Impediments to trade.

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genius of commerce. Impolitic prohibitions, originating in narrow and contracted ideas of national benefit, prevented the exportation of many articles. Induſtry had not yet diſcovered and improved the numerous ſources of internal riches. Naval enterprize, and diſcovery, rather than the ſpirit of trade, characterized the age. Gold was the object of general reſearch, rather than the exchange of commodities, and the progreſſive acquiſition of wealth. The example of Spain and Portugal, whoſe ſovereigns had over-run and conquered the richeſt portions of the Old and New World with incredible rapidity; and whoſe ſubjects returned home with the ſpoils of India, of Africa, and of Peru; had contributed to awaken avidity, and to debauch the ſober genius of laborious application. Men preferred diſtant and precarious expeditions, in queſt of plunder, or in ſearch of mines, to the beaten track of limited profit. The effect of ſo many cauſes, operating to one point, was ſenſibly felt; and may account for the ſlender and contracted portion of trade enjoyed by France, at this period of her hiſtory.

Objects of commercial reſearch.

Objects of exportation.

The three great and principal articles of exportation appear to have been corn, wine, and ſalt, though it was frequently prohibited, under the ſevereſt penalties, to ſend any grain out of the kingdom [1]. La Noue eſtimates the ſum annually received for theſe three commodities, from foreign nations; to which he adds a fourth, "Paſtel," or ſweetmeats; at twelve millions of livres, or about half a million ſterling [2]. All the weſtern provinces, included between the Loire and the Garonne; but, particularly Poitou, were productive of corn, which the Spaniards and Portugueze gladly purchaſed, in exchange for the luxuries of the eaſtern and weſtern hemiſpheres. The port of Les Sables d'Olonne, ſituated in the little iſland of Olonne, on the coaſt of Poitou, was the uſual mart, to which the ſhips of thoſe nations reſorted, under Henry the Third. A fleet of twenty-five

[1] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 505. [2] La Noue, p. 356.

Portugueze veſſels, laden with corn, and ready to return home, was attacked and captured, in the harbour above mentioned, contrary to the rights of nations, and on very inſufficient pretences, by a detachment of the Hugonots, from Rochelle, in 1577, notwithſtanding the oppoſition of the prince of Condé. It was an act of lawleſs and unauthorized piracy, which ſtrongly proves the inſecure ſtate of property and commerce in that age, when the crown, ſcarcely able to defend itſelf, could afford little protection either to its own ſubjects, or to foreigners, who viſited the kingdom for purpoſes of trade [3].

Wines.

Great quantities of corn were raiſed in ſome of the provinces near the Pyrenees, where the produce of eſtates was principally received in grain, and tranſported by the Garonne, to Bourdeaux [4]. But, that city was more renowned for its wines, which, in the ſixteenth, as well as in the eighteenth century, were in the higheſt eſtimation, throughout Europe. It may be doubted, whether before 1589, any wines, of the growth of Champagne or Burgundy, were exported by ſea, from France. We may form a very accurate judgment of the annual revenue which the crown derived from the commerce of the Garonne. It was eſtimated at more than a hundred thouſand crowns, in 1586, when Royan, a caſtle, commanding the entrance of the river, was ſurprized by one of the adherents of the king of Navarre [5].

Salt.

The Germans and Engliſh carried on a very conſiderable trade to Brouage, a town ſituate in the vicinity of Rochelle, and then poſſeſſing a commodious harbour. Salt was the principal, or only commodity, exported from thence; which was found in immenſe quantities, over the adjacent country. Theſe ſalt-pits and works produced a great revenue, from the foreign, as well as domeſtic conſumption [6]. The Hugonots derived from them one of their beſt pecuniary re-

[3] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 505—507.
[4] Comm. de Montluc, vol. iv. p. 165.
[5] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 573.
[6] Memoires de Caſt. p. 261.

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fources, as they were enabled to repay in ſalt, the various articles of commerce or of defence, received from England [7]. How vaſt the reſort of that nation was to Brouage, may be evinced by the circumſtance of Lanſac, who commanded the forces of Henry in 1577, when he made himſelf maſter of the place, having ſeized on near ſixty veſſels, belonging to the Engliſh, which were at anchor off the iſle of Ré. Elizabeth, juſtly irritated at ſuch an infraction of the treaty between the two crowns, immediately cauſed an embargo to be laid on all the French ſhips in her ports; and it was not till after a negotiation of ſome length, that matters were re-adjuſted [8].

Brouage.

Trade to the Levant.

Scarcely any branches of manufacture were exported by the French, in the period of which we are treating; and vaſt ſums were annually ſent out of the kingdom, for the purchaſe of various articles of luxury. The Levant trade drained France of above ſixty thouſand pounds ſterling a-year; the Turks, in that age, as the Chineſe, in the preſent, accepting only ſpecie in return for the commodities which foreigners demanded [9]. Spices, and many other valuable productions of India, ſtill continued to be received by way of Alexandria, notwithſtanding the augmenting competition of the European nations who had diſcovered, or of thoſe who began to participate in the benefits of the paſſage round the Cape of Good Hope. The Ottoman miniſters appear even to have entertained the moſt enlarged conceptions of commerce, if we may judge of them from the propoſitions made by Amurath the Third, in 1582, to Francis, duke of Anjou, at that time ſovereign of the Low Countries. Embaſſadors were ſent by the ſultan, with offers to make Antwerp the ſole emporium for all the goods imported into Europe from Greece and the Turkiſh provinces in Aſia. They demanded permiſſion for eighteen merchants of their nation to reſide in the city of Antwerp

Propoſal for making Antwerp the emporium of the Turkiſh trade.

[7] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 515.
[8] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 529.
[9] Tavannes, p. 469.

in

in order to conduct the ſales. It was projected to land the articles of merchandize at Marſeilles; to tranſport them acroſs Provence and Languedoc, to Bourdeaux; and to ſhip them from the river Garonne, to Flanders. We cannot ſufficiently admire a plan ſo extenſive in its principles and operations; and which, if it had been realized, might have produced a vaſt revolution in the commercial ſyſtem of Europe, before the lapſe of half a century. But, the anſwer returned to the propoſal, was inconcluſive; and the dominion of the duke of Anjou in the Netherlands was too ſhort, to permit of its being reſumed on either ſide [10].

Trade to the Baltic.

The trade between France and the Baltic was very limited, if it can be properly ſaid to have had any exiſtence, before the reign of Charles the Ninth. The election of his brother, the duke of Anjou, to the Poliſh throne, in 1573, opened a proſpect of eſtabliſhing an advantageous traffic with Dantzic, which city conſtituted a part of the dependencies of Poland. A ſociety of merchants, to the number of near thirty, in the beginning of the year 1574, fitted out ſome ſhips from Dieppe, in hopes, by the favor and protection of the new prince, to acquire a ſhare of the Baltic commerce; but, Henry's precipitate flight from Cracow ſoon afterwards, probably withdrew the principal incitement to the enterprize [11]. It may excite ſome degree of ſurprize, that, notwithſtanding the impediments oppoſed by nature to any connexion between France and Peru, from the length and dangers of a navigation round Cape Horn; and in defiance of the jealous precautions embraced by the court of Madrid, to exclude all European nations from any participation in the benefits ariſing from their poſſeſſions in South America; yet, that ſhips from France viſited thoſe diſtant countries. We find in 1576, that a captain Nivelle, an experienced officer of the marine, on his return from Peru, was driven to take refuge with his veſſel in the ports of England, by the

To Peru.

[10] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 646. [11] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 390.

violence

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violence of a ſtorm. He was immediately arreſted by order of Elizabeth; his ſhip, detained; and he himſelf was in imminent hazard of being treated as a criminal of ſtate. It is not eaſy to account for this conduct in the Engliſh miniſters, unleſs it was done to conciliate the good will of Philip the Second. That Nivelle was no unauthorized adventurer, is evident, from the preſſing ſolicitations made in his behalf, by the king of France: but, whether the object of his voyage had been plunder, or commerce, it is not poſſible to aſcertain [12].

Trade between England and France.

Between the French and Engliſh, there exiſted a very conſiderable mercantile intercourſe, under the two laſt kings of the family of Valois. It was, notwithſtanding, perpetually interrupted by diſputes, ſeizures, confiſcations, and acts of violence, on the part of each crown, or nation. Elizabeth, whatever pretenſions of amity ſhe might affect, carried on a gainful traffic, by means of her ſubjects, with the Hugonots; and that able princeſs, conſcious of the embarraſſments with which the French monarchs were neceſſitated to ſtruggle, obſerved ſcarcely any meaſures, in her treatment of the individuals, who entered her ports. It is eaſy to ſee, that the Engliſh were commonly the aggreſſors, though they always demanded, and uſually obtained ſatisfaction. The depreſſion under which France laboured from 1560, to a period conſiderably later than the death of Henry the Third, has contributed to augment the luſtre of Elizabeth's reign. She may be ſaid, on many occaſions, to have almoſt dictated to the kings of France, in matters of policy, as well as of commerce [13]. Numberleſs proofs of this fact are to be found in the contemporary writers.

Bankers.

The principal bankers who were eſtabliſhed in Paris before 1589, ſeem, as in London, at that time, to have been Italians, or Lombards. Very arbitrary and ſevere enquiries into their pecuniary tranſactions

[12] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 497 and 498.

[13] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 316; vol. iii. p. 431 and 432, p. 515, and p. 535.

and

and remittances, were made by government, at pleaſure. Seizures of money, upon vague, or inſufficient pretences, often followed. Bankers were prohibited from having in their poſſeſſion, any gold, or ſilver coin, except of France, or Spain, on pain of confiſcation [14]. We may form ſome eſtimate of the ſtate of commercial intercourſe between Paris and London, in December, 1573, by the circumſtance of there not being a ſingle banker in the former city, who had a correſpondent in England. Charles the Ninth expreſsly aſſerts this extraordinary, and curious fact, in a letter to his embaſſador at the court of Elizabeth, of that date. He adds, that there was no banker in Paris, who could furniſh letters of exchange on London, for ſo large a ſum as fifty thouſand crowns; and he refers it to his miniſter to diſcover a mode of making the remittance [15]. Yet, a few months later, in June, 1574, Chiverny, the agent of Henry the Third, and who was afterwards chancellor of France, ſays, that he contrived, as ſoon as Charles the Ninth was dead; in the uncertainty of the rout which his maſter might take on his return from Poland; to tranſmit "letters of bank" to Augſburg, to Vienna, and to Venice. Twenty-five thouſand crowns were contained in each of the three remittances. It diſplays the ſuperior degree of facility in mercantile tranſactions with Germany, and the regular communication ſubſiſting between Paris and that country [16].

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Intercourſe between London and Paris.

Remittances.

When Henry the Third borrowed a hundred thouſand crowns of Ferdinand the Firſt, great duke of Tuſcany, in 1589, a part of the ſum was ſent in ſpecie, acroſs the Apennines, and the Alps, from Florence to Augſburg, on the backs of mules. Ferdinand did not embrace this mode of remittance, from any difficulty of procuring letters of exchange; but, with an intention of keeping the affair concealed. Such was the publicity of bankers accounts, that, if conveyed through their medium, it muſt have become univerſally known throughout Tuſcany [17].

Mode of remitting money.

[14] Buſbeq. letter 8th.
[15] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 366—369.
[16] Chiverny, vol. i. p. 52.
[17] De Thou, vol. x. p. 630.

While

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Colonies.

While Spain and Portugal, fortified by the Papal grant, quietly divided between them the vaſt regions of Aſia and America; France remained deſtitute of any colonies, or eſtabliſhments, beyond the Cape of Good Hope, or the Atlantic. Francis the Firſt was not inſenſible to ſo ſevere an excluſion. "I wiſh," ſaid he, "to ſee the "article in Adam's will, by which the kings of Spain and Portugal "are authorized, in virtue of his bequeſt, to divide the New World, "without allotting me any ſhare[18]." The baron de Levi having diſcovered Canada, in 1518, Francis ſent out Cartier, an able navigator of St. Malo, to aſcertain the nature and productions of that inhoſpitable country. He arrived there in 1534, and returned to France with the expected information; but, no attempt ſeems to have been then made to plant, ſubject, or colonize Canada[19].

Attempts at colonization, under Henry the Second.

Under Henry the Second, in 1556, Villegagnon, a French gentleman, knight of Malta, having obtained the approbation of Coligni, admiral of France, to carry out a number of adventurers to Brazil, landed there, and conſtructed a fort. A reinforcement was ſent him in the following year, principally compoſed of Calviniſts, from Geneva. Many women embarked among them; and preparations were made for eſtabliſhing a powerful colony. But, theſe proſpects ſoon ceaſed: diſſenſions, ariſing from religious cauſes, produced the moſt deſtructive conſequences; and the Portugueze, joined with the natives, having attacked Villegagnon, he was reduced to the neceſſity of leaving his artillery, embarking his followers, and returning to Europe[20].

Efforts of Coligni, to form colonies.

Not diſcouraged by preceding misfortunes, Coligni, whoſe vaſt and expanded mind was continually directed towards objects of national advantage; ſent out, in 1562, Ribaud, in order to form an eſtabliſhment in Florida. He was unſucceſsful: nevertheleſs, in 1564, Lodoniere, a ſecond adventurer, effected the object of the expedition,

[18] Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 635.
[19] Ibid. vol. i. p. 635 and 636.
[20] Hiſt. Univ. D'Aub. vol. i. p. 41 and 42.

built

built a fortreſs, and entered into connexions of friendſhip and commerce with the Indians. Ribaud returning with ſeven ſhips in the following year, the two chiefs prepared to puſh their conqueſts, when a ſuperior ſquadron of Spaniſh veſſels appeared. Hoſtilities enſued, which were unfavorable to the French; and Ribaud, with five hundred of his followers, having, on the ſolemn aſſurances of ſafety, conſented to a parley with the enemy, they were indiſcriminately maſſacred, and their bodies reduced to aſhes. Lodonniere eſcaped on board the veſſels, and landed ſafely in France[21]. Hiſtory has ſcarcely ever commemorated a more complete, or extraordinary revenge, than was taken for this atrocious breach of faith. A Frenchman, named des Gourgues, deſcended of a reſpectable family at Bourdeaux; and who had been a galley ſlave, chained to the oar by the Spaniards, from which ſtate of ſervitude he was redeemed; undertook to vindicate the wounded honor of his country, and to retaliate the cruelty of the Spaniards. Enraged at the relation of the events which had taken place in Florida, he ſold his property, in order to fit out three veſſels; the largeſt of which did not exceed two hundred and fifty tons, and the ſmalleſt was only fifty. About three hundred perſons, of all deſcriptions, allured by hopes of gain or plunder, accompanied him on the expedition. Arriving on the coaſt of Florida, he took the forts by ſtorm, which the Spaniſh commander, Melandez, had occupied; and after reproaching him with his perfidy and barbarity, he cauſed the whole garriſon, amounting to near four hundred and ſixty men, to be either hanged, or put to death. Melandez had affixed labels to the dead bodies of Ribaud and the French, whom he maſſacred; ſignifying, that "they were "ſo treated, not as French, but as Lutherans." In imitation of this inſult, des Gourgues attached a ſimilar inſcription to the ſlaughtered

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Maſſacre of the French adventurers.

Retaliation on the Spaniards.

[21] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 248 and 249.

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Spaniards, declaring, that "they were not put to death as ſubjects of "Philip the Second, but, as perfidious miſcreants." Having put all the artillery taken from the forts, on board his ſhips, he re-embarked, and landed at Rochelle in June, 1568, after a paſſage of only ſeventeen days. But, inſtead of receiving any marks of approbation from Charles the Ninth on his arrival at court, he had occaſion to employ the interceſſion of his friends, to prevent his being capitally puniſhed. The admiration, expreſſed by his countrymen, and by foreign nations, at ſo ſignal an act of vengeance, was his only reward [22]. It ſtrongly depictures the ſpirit of the age, in which the genius of chivalry was not yet extinct; and it ſtill more forcibly demonſtrates the abject ſituation to which France was reduced, after the death of Henry the Second, when Spain remained for near forty years, the moſt formidable power in Europe. From 1568, to the acceſſion of Henry the Fourth, no further attempt ſeems to have been made, to form colonies, or eſtabliſhments, beyond the Atlantic: a circumſtance which cannot excite ſurprize, if we reflect on the calamitous condition of the kingdom between thoſe two periods.

Behaviour of the French court.

Manufactures.

If, from the conſideration of commerce, we turn our attention to manufactures, we ſhall find that they were neither numerous, nor advanced to a ſtate of any perfection, under Henry the Third. Articles of elegance and luxury were imported from foreign nations; and even ſuch as were of general conſumption, had not attained beyond their infancy. A fabrick of ſilk had been introduced under Francis the Firſt; but, it met with many impediments, from the climate, from the ignorance of the artiſts, and above all, from the troubles of France. It was reſerved for a happier and more tranquil reign, to awaken, and direct the induſtry of the French in this branch of art. Leather and parchment were prepared with conſiderable dexterity, at Troyes in Champagne; which was likewiſe renowned

[22] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 354—356.

for

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for the goodneſs of its dyes, in which occupation the inhabitants were principally employed [23]. A manufacture of white paper was eſtabliſhed at Brignolles, in Provence, about the beginning of Henry the Second's reign, and it was not the only one of the kind in the kingdom [24]. The French in the ſixteenth century, as in the preſent, appear to have diſcovered little ingenuity, or talents, for working in ſteel and iron. Fire-arms were far better fabricated in Lombardy. It was from Milan, that all the beſt arquebuſſes, corſlets, helmets, and muſquets, were procured. The ſcience of gilding and inlaying armor was, likewiſe, practiſed with ſuperior ſkill, beyond the Alps. Gaſpard, an artiſt of Milan, was the favorite workman, who ſupplied Paris with every kind of arms, under Charles the Ninth, and his ſucceſſor. Negroti, a Milaneze merchant, reſided for the purpoſe, in that capital; where he acquired a fortune of above twenty-five thouſand crowns, by the buſineſs, in the courſe of fifteen, or ſixteen years [25]. We may judge how high a price was paid for armor in general, by the expence of a common morion, or headpiece gilt, and fabricated at Milan. It coſt in Paris, ſeven crowns: but, encouragement having been held out to workmen in that branch, the ſecret of gilding was diſcovered and ſucceſsfully executed in France. Even then, the morions were purchaſed in Italy, and finiſhed in Paris. Their price was, however, reduced to about four, to five crowns [26].

Fire-arms.

Milan ſupplied France with that article.

Charles the Ninth, in 1560, endeavoured to introduce among his ſoldiers, muſquets, fabricated at Metz, and Abbeville, where manufactures of arms were eſtabliſhed; but, it was found impoſſible to accuſtom the troops to handle and carry them, on account of their enormous and oppreſſive weight [27]. The fineſt muſquets long continued to be brought from Milan. Gunpowder was made in

Muſquets.

[23] De Thou, vol. x. p. 314.
[24] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 13.
[25] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 294.
[26] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 298 and 299.
[27] Ibid. p. 302—304.

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France, under Henry the Third; but, not in ſufficient quantity to diſpenſe with the neceſſity of importing that article, as well as ſalt-petre, from foreign ſtates. Genoa, in particular, ſupplied the French with gunpowder, on emergencies [28].

Sumptuary laws.

Sumptuary laws were enacted by the vigilance of the celebrated chancellor l'Hopital, under Charles the Ninth, with an eſpecial view to diſcriminate the different orders of the people. Induſtry ſuffered little by the prohibition of articles of luxury, chiefly derived from foreign countries; and morals were benefited by the regulation. Princes, dukes, and their wives, were alone permitted the uſe of gold and ſilver ſtuffs. Silk, diamonds, and pearls, were interdicted to all except gentlewomen [29]. In the beginning of 1583, theſe laws were renewed, and pecuniary penalties affixed to the breach of their obſervance [30]. Henry the Third, while ſunk in luxury, himſelf, and indulging his minions in every refinement of an effeminate taſte, affected to deprive the other ſex of their natural ornaments, and to execute the new edict reſpecting dreſs, with the utmoſt ſeverity. By an impolitic exerciſe of his power, he commanded the provoſt of the palace, an officer, whoſe juriſdiction extended indefinitely over the metropolis; to arreſt, and to convey to priſon, all ſuch females as he ſhould find, violating the ſumptuary regulations. In obedience to the king's orders, he ſeized, and dragged into confinement, not leſs than fifty, or ſixty women, among whom were ſeveral of condition. They were even forcibly detained in the priſon of the Fort l'Eveque, near Paris, till the next day, though offers were made to pay the penalty incurred, and to give ſecurity for their future compliance with the edict. But, Henry was not far from repenting of his indiſcreet interference with the police of the capital. A ſedition had almoſt taken place: the provoſt narrowly eſcaped the effects of the popular indignation; and the king condeſcended to repair in perſon to the

Regulations reſpecting dreſs.

[28] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 212, and p. 278.

[29] Traduction de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 118.

[30] L'Etoile, p. 72.

priſon,

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priſon, to releaſe the captives, and even to pay the fees incurred for their confinement. This curious fact happened in November, 1583[31].

Agriculture.

Agriculture could not poſſibly have attained beyond its rudeſt ſtate, in a country where the harveſt was rarely reaped by the ſame hands which had ſowed the grain; where the huſbandman was at the mercy of the ſoldier; and where impolitic trade laws withdrew the neceſſary encouragement from the cultivator of the ſoil. The ravages of famine were frequently experienced in their utmoſt ſeverity. At Paris, in May, 1586, ſuch was the dearth of corn, that a peck of wheat ſold from three to four crowns[32]. It was even higher in the month of June, of the ſucceeding year, when the ſame meaſure of corn roſe to five crowns, or thirty livres, in the metropolis; and to ſeven, or eight crowns, in the ſurrounding cities[33]. We may judge of the miſeries which muſt have been experienced by the poor, at a time when, it would ſeem, no proviſion was made by the laws, for their maintenance. Contributions for the ſupport of the poor, were altogether voluntary, before the year 1587. During the famine of 1586, ſuch was the prodigious concourſe of beggars in the ſtreets of Paris, that it became indiſpenſable to adopt ſome meaſures for their ſubſiſtance. Two deputies from each pariſh, went from houſe to houſe, collecting charitable donations[34]. This remedy being only temporary, and inadequate to the cure of the evil, it was enacted in an aſſembly held in Paris, on the 8th January, 1587, that the citizens ſhould raiſe at once, the aggregate ſum for three years, taken at the eſtimate of that which was weekly raiſed and appropriated to the relief of the poor. With ſo conſiderable a fund, which was actually collected, it was propoſed to clear the ſtreets of the numerous beggars; to compel thoſe who were able, to work, and to feed the infirm[35]. Notwithſtanding theſe beneficent and judicious meaſures, it was found neceſſary, only five months afterwards, during the ſcarcity of corn, to ſend two thouſand

Famine. Its ſeverity.

Police. Beggars.

Poor laws.

[31] Buſbeq. letter 29. L'Etoile, p. 72 and 73.

[32] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 207.

[33] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 222.

[34] Ibid. p. 207.

[35] Ibid. p. 217.

poor,

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poor, to the hoſpital of Grenelle, without the city; where an allowance of five ſous, or two-pence halfpenny, was made daily to each, by the king. Although ſuch a diſtribution muſt have been, if we conſider the relative value of money, extremely ample; yet, it became requiſite to withdraw it, and to place the poor in their former ſituation, becauſe, unreſtrained by the proviſion allotted for their maintenance, they could not be kept from returning to the capital, and reſuming their original profeſſion [36].

State of the peaſants.

During the thirty years which elapſed between the death of Henry the Second, and the extinction of his poſterity in the perſon of Henry the Third, the condition of the French peaſants may, perhaps, be juſtly ſaid to have been more deplorable than that of any other claſs of men, in Europe. The greater part of the period was paſſed in civil war; and the few intervals of nominal peace, were ſhort, precarious, ſanguinary, and cruel. The "ipſa etiam pace "fævum" of the Roman hiſtorian, might be applied with equal truth, to the French under the three laſt kings of Valois, as to the countrymen of Tacitus, during the diſſenſions and calamities which followed the acceſſion of Galba. Neither the royal army, nor the forces of the Proteſtants being regularly paid, it became impoſſible for them to ſubſiſt, except by plunder; nor was any lenity ſhewn to friends and adherents, by a famiſhed ſoldiery, undiſciplined, fierce, and rendered obdurate by habits of violence. Even the ceſſation of actual hoſtilities, in conſequence of the treaties which were repeatedly made between the two parties, was productive of little redreſs. We may be ſatisfied of this fact, by peruſing the deſcription given to Charles the Ninth, in one of the ſhort truces, rather than times of peace, which took place under his reign, at the cloſe of 1573. It was drawn by a nobleman of the firſt rank, the count de Tavannes; and he ſpeaks only of the Burgundian peaſants, who had ſuffered far leſs

Oppreſſion of them.

Condition of the Burgundian peaſantry.

[36] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de France, p. 222.

by

by the preceding diſaſters, than the inhabitants of almoſt all the other provinces. "They complain," ſays he, "to your majeſty, that the "gendarmerie not being paid, pillage, ranſom, and treat as enemies, "the people in all the villages; nor do they dare even to utter a "complaint, leſt the ſoldier, irritated, ſhould complete the deſolation "of their families and properties, by inſtantly reducing their cottages "to aſhes [37]." If ſuch was the treatment of the Catholic peaſants, by men of their own perſuaſion, and in a moment of peace; what muſt have been the enormities acted, when civil and religious enmity extinguiſhed every emotion of humanity? Marſhal Montluc did not bluſh to be called the "Bourreau Royal [38];" and his Memoirs, in almoſt every page, bear bloody teſtimony to the juſtice of the appellation [39]. We are ſtruck with horror, on peruſing in La Noue, and in d'Aubigné, the incredible and wanton acts of flagitious cruelty, exerciſed upon the inferior claſſes of ſociety, who were incapable of reſiſtance, and whoſe ſufferings do not excite more pity, than they awaken indignation [40]. The "Gautiers," who were put to the ſword in 1589, by Montpenſier, were wretched Norman peaſants, driven to deſpair by oppreſſion, and rendered ſavage from the cruelty of the nobles and ſoldiery [41]. Religion had no concern in their inſurrection, which reſulted from civil and political cauſes.

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Cruelties exerciſed towards the Hugonots.

The Gautiers.

Nor was it only on the huſbandman or the cottager, that military ferocity exhauſted its rage. All the lower orders, deſtitute of any efficacious protection, were alike victims to the deſpotiſm of their ſuperiors. Strozzi, though in many reſpects, an officer of high merit, and no way diſtinguiſhed by a natural barbarity of diſpoſition, yet, committed an act, to parallel which, we muſt have recourſe to the annals of Domitian, or Caracalla, in antiquity. Unhappily, the preſent ſavage and infatuated race of republicans, if that epithet can juſtly belong to frantic and furious banditti, have outdone the moſt

Barbarity of Strozzi.

[37] Tavannes, p. 34.
[38] Montluc, vol. iv. p. 121.
[39] Montluc, vol. iv. p. 112, p. 313, p. 221 and 222, and p. 92 and 93.
[40] La Noue, p. 346. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. paſſim. Chron. Nov. vol. i p. 9.
[41] De Thou, vol. x. p. 600.

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extravagant crimes of the Roman Cæſars; and have rendered credible the fabulous, or exaggerated enormities of the greateſt tyrants who have deſolated the earth. In 1570, after the concluſion of the peace between Charles the Ninth and Coligni, the army was, from its undiſciplined ſtate, accompanied by a vaſt number of proſtitutes, and common women. Strozzi, who had made many ineffectual attempts to purge the camp of them, cauſed above eight hundred of theſe unfortunate creatures, at a ſignal given, to be precipitated from the Pont de Cé, near Angers, into the river Loire, where they all periſhed. The ſtory is ſo extraordinary, that it would be incredible, if it was not related by Brantome, an eye witneſs, Strozzi's intimate friend and panegyriſt [42]. He, however, condemns it as a deteſtable act, and attributes it to the counſels of others. It appears inconteſtably, that no ſort of puniſhment was inflicted on the perpetrator of ſo abominable a deed, except the frowns and averted looks of the ladies of the court, incenſed at the cruelty ſhewn to perſons of their own ſex. But, a mutiny had nearly taken place among the troops themſelves, who beheld the objects of their affection ſwallowed up in the waves, and crying piteouſly for ſuccour. If any thing can augment the enormity of the fact, it is the conſideration, that it was a cool, and deliberate proceeding, done by the colonel-general of the French infantry, and perpetrated almoſt in the preſence of his ſovereign, who was at Angers when it was committed. The crimes of the duke of Alva, Strozzi's contemporary, were not reflective murders, wantonly acted; but ſanguinary executions, enjoined by Philip the Second, performed with ſolemnity, and in ſome meaſure palliated, or juſtified by the revolt of the Flemings. Far from eſteeming it neceſſary, in order to reſtore diſcipline among the Spaniſh bands, to cauſe the women who miniſtered to their pleaſures to be murdered, the general of Philip permitted them in an ample degree. When he marched from Milan into Flanders, in the year

Reflexions on that event.

Oppoſite conduct of the duke of Alva.

[42] Frantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 416—418.

1567,

1567, during which march the ſevereſt obedience was enforced with rigor, and not a peaſant was deſpoiled of his property in the ſlighteſt inſtance; twelve hundred courtezans accompanied the camp. Four hundred were of a ſuperior deſcription, and rode on horſeback: the remaining eight hundred followed on foot [43]. CHAP. II.

Calculations of the population of extenſive countries, are, in general, made upon very problematical principles, and are ſubject to great uncertainty. National vanity leads ſo obviouſly to exaggerate, that we muſt lend an academic faith to all aſſertions, unleſs ſupported by incontrovertible facts. It is difficult to form any decided opinion upon the number of people which France contained, at the period of which we are treating; and no contemporary writer has ventured to name their aggregate amount: but, we are juſtified in ſuppoſing, that, in an age when civil war had made ſuch deep ravages, the kingdom could not, in proportion to its magnitude, have contained as many inhabitants, as it did before the late revolution in 1789. Yet, La Noue ſpeaks of the multitudes who ſwarmed in every province; and compares the population of France to that of the county of Flanders, before the inſurrections, produced by the tyranny of Philip the Second, had diminiſhed the numbers of the Flemings [44]. His teſtimony is reſpectable, not only from the known integrity of the author; but, from its being written under the reign of Henry the Third, in a period of the greateſt national depreſſion. We are aſſured, that in 1581, the whole kingdom contained ninety-ſix biſhopricks, and one hundred and thirty-two thouſand pariſhes and hamlets [45]. Four years earlier, in 1577, the duke of Nevers calculated, that in the dominions of France, there were three millions of hearths. If we eſtimate each of them at ſix perſons to a family, it will give a population of only eighteen millions. But, it muſt be remembered, that neither French Flanders, Artois, Alſace, Lorrain, the county of Population of France.

[43] Strada de Bell. Belg. vol. ii. p. 90. Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Etran. p. 84.

[44] La Noue, p. 356.

[45] Cabinet des trois Perles, p. 5; cited in the Satyre Menippee, vol. ii. p. 70.

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Burgundy, Rouſillon, Cerdagne, nor Bearn, were then included in the monarchy. It was ſuppoſed that by a poll-tax, levied equally on all the inhabitants, a ſum of twenty millions of livres might be raiſed annually [46], or about eight hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling.

Population of Paris.

On the number of inhabitants in Paris, we may form a more accurate judgment. It was found, that in 1588, there were in the capital, at leaſt twenty thouſand men in the ſervice of the League, capable of bearing arms; many ſtrangers having been recently introduced into the city, by the adherents of the houſe of Guiſe, in order to augment their ſtrength. The whole population exceeded two hundred thouſand [47].

Paris. Its ſtate.

The French metropolis, at the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign, was divided into ſixteen wards, or quarters, and was principally built on the northern bank of the Seine, and in the iſland of "Notre "Dame." It had not yet made any conſiderable progreſs to the ſouth of the river, where the "Fauxbourg St. Germain" is now ſituated. Strong walls, flanked with large towers, ſurrounded the city; and the keys of the gates were depoſited in the hands of the municipal magiſtrates, who took eſpecial care that they ſhould be carefully ſhut every evening. The citizens were regularly enrolled, diſciplined, and accuſtomed to the uſe and exerciſe of arms: they elected their own military officers; had their places of aſſembling, their banners, and their watch-words. If not formidable from their ſkill, they were ſtill reſpectable from their numbers [48]. In general, the ſtreets were ſo narrow, that it was eaſy to leap from the tops of the houſes on one ſide, to thoſe on the other; and it was a common paſtime, during the carnival, for the young nobility to divert themſelves by this hazardous amuſement [49]. That the principal ſtreets were paved, is undoubted; ſince we find that, at the preparations made for celebrating the unfortunate tournament in which Henry the Second was killed by Montgomery, in June, 1559, the ſtreet "Saint "Antoine" was unpaved, converted into liſts, and adorned with

Municipal government.

Mode of building.

[46] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 197.
[47] Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 6. Mem. de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 163.
[48] Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 3.
[49] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 326.

theatres and triumphal arches [50]. Other proofs of this fact might be adduced: but, the dirt and filth were notwithſtanding ſuch, as to render all paſſage exceedingly difficult, and to contribute, in an eminent degree, to the peſtilential and malignant diſtempers, by which the capital was frequently deſolated. In 1583, Montjoſieu, a man of talents, and peculiarly ſkilled in mechanics, undertook the execution of a plan which he had formed, for cleanſing the ſtreets; but, the expence ſo much exceeded the eſtimate made by him, that in endeavoring to accompliſh it, he conſiderably impaired his own private fortune [51]. At all the corners, were fixed heavy chains, commonly faſtened and ſealed; but, which could be, at the ſhorteſt warning, ſtretched acroſs; and by the addition of barrels filled with earth, they formed a barricado, inſurmountable to infantry, or cavalry. Henry the Third experienced the formidable nature of theſe barriers, at the inſurrection of the Pariſians, in May, 1588 [52]. The private houſes were conſtructed with ſalley ports, which rendered them more tenable and defenſible againſt an armed force [53]. On the other hand, the Baſtile might be regarded at once, as the citadel of Paris, and as a priſon of ſtate. It was ſtrong; and the treachery alone of Tetu, who commanded in it, produced its ſurrender to the duke of Guiſe, immediately after the king's flight from the metropolis [54]. Ornano had offered to maintain it, againſt all the forces of the League.

Regulations of police.

The Baſtile.

The Louvre itſelf was rather a fortreſs, than a palace; and did not become the ordinary reſidence of the French monarchs, before the reign of Charles the Ninth. Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, occaſionally inhabited it; and the latter of thoſe princes made conſiderable embelliſhments, or augmentations; during which time he inhabited the Hotel de Maigrez, a houſe confiſcated to the crown, and preſented by him afterwards to the conſtable, Montmorenci [55]. The palace of the "Tournelles," ſituated not far from

The Louvre.

The Tournelles.

[50] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 84 and 85.
[51] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 78.
[52] Ibid. vol. x. p. 258. Davila, p. 690 and 691. Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 3.
[53] Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 3.
[54] De Thou, vol. x. p. 269.
[55] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 510.

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the Baſtile, was the reſidence of Henry the Second, at the time of his unfortunate and premature death: but, Catherine of Medecis, ſtruck with horror at the recollection and ſight of a place, which had been the ſcene of ſo tragical an accident, demoliſhed it to the foundations, and even cauſed the gardens contiguous, to be deſtroyed. We cannot wonder at her averſion to a palace, in the great hall of which, decorated at that time for balls and feſtivals, the dead body of her huſband lay in ſtate within a few days afterwards, ſurrounded with torches, altars, black cloth, and all the apparatus of funeral pomp [56]. The aſpect of the Louvre, like that of almoſt all the palaces of kings throughout Europe, till the end of the ſixteenth century, inſpired terror, and partook more of the nature of a priſon, than of a royal reſidence, in many reſpects. It was compoſed of towers, conſtructed in a Gothic taſte, ſurrounded with a wide and deep ditch, acroſs which the entrance lay through vaſt gates, conſtantly guarded by archers. In 1574, Catherine of Medecis, as ſoon as Charles the Ninth had expired, cauſed all the doors and entrances to the Louvre, except one, to be cloſed up; and even of the remaining entrance, the gate was ſhut, and only the wicket left open, on each ſide of which were ſtationed the Switzers, who never quitted it by day or night [57]. Theſe precautions were taken by the queen-mother, in order to prevent the eſcape of her ſon, the duke of Alenſon, and of the king of Navarre, who remained a long time, captives in the palace. Margaret, of Valois, in the year 1578, by an effort of courage and fidelity above her ſex, contrived to let down her brother, the duke of Alenſon, by means of a rope, into the moat of the Louvre, whence he reached the abbey of St. Genevieve: but, ſhe deſcribes the attempt as of the moſt perilous nature [58].

Aſpect of the Louvre.

There were few monuments of architecture in Paris, at the deceaſe of Henry the Third. Catherine of Medecis, who, with the vices of the family from which ſhe ſprung, inherited, likewiſe, their taſte for

[56] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 85.
[57] L'Etoile, p. 4.
[58] Mem. de Margarite de Valois, p. 164, 165.

the

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the arts, began to conſtruct the palace of the Tuilleries, in 1564, and ſhe completed it before her death, in 1589. It was a magnificent edifice, raiſed on the models of antient Greece, purified from the barbariſm of the middle ages. Europe had hitherto ſeen no building, which could be placed in competition with it, beyond the Alps [59]. Not content with ſo ſplendid a proof of her paſſion for the elegant arts, ſhe erected another palace in the pariſh of St. Euſtace, on which ſhe expended immenſe ſums, and at which ſhe uſually reſided [60]. The ſecond hotel in point of magnificence, in 1587, was that of the duke of Epernon, eſtimated at only five thouſand crowns leſs value than the former [61]. We may form an idea of the price given for houſes of the higheſt deſcription, in 1575, by the ſum which Henry the Third paid for the one preſented by him to Chiverny, and in which he reſided when chancellor of France. It coſt twenty-ſix thouſand livres, or about eleven hundred pounds ſterling [62].

The Tuilleries.

Palaces.

Before the death of Charles the Ninth, there was not any bridge which croſſed the river Seine in its whole extent: thoſe previouſly exiſting, only conducted from the northern bank, into the iſland of "Notre Dame." In the month of May, 1578, the foundations of the "Pont neuf" were laid by the king in perſon. It was compoſed of hewn ſtone; du Cerceau being the architect; and a tax was impoſed on the people expreſsly for its conſtruction [63]. The troubles which ſoon aroſe in the kingdom, interrupted its continuance; and it was not completed till their termination, under the ſucceeding reign. Quelus, the celebrated minion of Henry the Third, killed in a duel with Entragues, was interred with a pomp little ſhort of royal, on the ſame day when the "Pont neuf" was begun; and the king, who was inconſolable for his loſs, wiſhed to have im-

Bridges. Pont neuf.

[59] L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 648.
[60] De Thou, vol. x. p. 502.
[61] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 167.
[62] Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 62.
[63] L'Etoile, p. 29 and 30. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 727. Chron. Septennaire, p. 447.

mortalized

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mortalized the memory of his favorite, by calling it the "Pont aux "Pleurs [64]."

Paris began to be regarded as the royal residence.

Although Paris had, for ages, been regarded as the capital of the kingdom, it was not till after the year 1577, that it began to be the ordinary and general reſidence of the ſovereign. Louis the Eleventh, and his two immediate ſucceſſors, held their court more frequently on the Loire, at Tours, Amboiſe, or Blois. Chambord, under Francis the Firſt, as well as Fontainbleau; the former of which he built, and the latter he re-conſtructed; were the favorite places of his abode [65]. Henry the Second betrayed the ſame preference; and Charles the Ninth commonly divided his time between Monceaux, St. Germain, and Vincennes. At the laſt-mentioned caſtle, only about two leagues from the metropolis, he expired. But, Henry the Third, though he twice convoked the aſſembly of the States General at Blois; yet, from preference, reſided during the greater part of his reign, at Paris. The city derived no ſmall acceſſion of opulence and ſplendor from the circumſtance; and the king ſeverely reproached the inhabitants for their ingratitude and revolt, after the numerous marks of predilection, which he had uniformly exhibited towards them [66]. If it were permitted to the hiſtorian to indulge in ſpeculation, it might be curious to reflect on the deſtiny which awaited Paris, if Henry had not periſhed by the knife of Clement; and to conjecture what changes might have taken place in the metropolis of the French monarchy.

Rigorous intentions of Henry the Third, towards Paris.

Davila expreſsly ſays, that on the evening preceding his aſſaſſination, the king publickly declared, that "within a few days, "neither houſes nor walls ſhould exiſt, and that only the veſtiges of "Paris ſhould be diſcernible." It is highly probable, that the threat would have been executed in its utmoſt rigor, and that the victorious troops, compoſed of different nations, would have vied with each other, in accompliſhing the vengeance of their maſter. The age was

64 Vie de Mar. de Val. p. 258.
65 Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. p. 10—13. Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 277—279.
66 Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 66.

prone

prone to acts of blood; and it muſt be admitted, that no ſovereign ever received from rebellious ſubjects, greater cauſe for indignation. Henry's death extricated the Pariſians from the awful, and imminent deſtruction [67]. So perfectly was the king's determination of transferring his future court and reſidence to ſome other place, known throughout France; that in 1588, after Henry's flight to Chartres, the inhabitants of Tours and Lyons ſent deputations, to beſeech of him, to give the preference to their reſpective cities [68]. It may be conjectured, that he would have fixed his abode, as well as transferred the courts of law, and other appendages of the metropolis, to the banks of the Loire. Philip the Second had given him a recent example of the kind, by quitting Toledo, the antient capital of Caſtile, and chuſing Madrid for the new ſeat of the Spaniſh monarchs.

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Reflexions on it.

There is no circumſtance which more ſtrongly characterizes the period before us, than the univerſal corruption of juſtice. Francis the Firſt had introduced the purchaſe and ſale of employments, among the members of the various parliaments of France, who conſtituted the ſupreme tribunals of civil and criminal judicature. His ſucceſſors, peculiarly, Henry the Third, had augmented, in a vaſt proportion, the number of magiſtrates in every court; and as all the charges were venal, the perſons who bought, had no other object in view, than to reimburſe themſelves for the expence incurred, by the moſt iniquitous perverſions of equity. The ſovereign himſelf, unreſtrained either by the majeſty and ſanctity of the throne, or by a regard to the felicity of his people, did not bluſh to interfere in deciſions of law, ſometimes by ſolicitation, and not unfrequently, by open violence. Examples of both, continually occur. In 1578, at the entreaty of his minions, Henry condeſcended to proſecute, by perſonal importunity, the ſuit of

Corruption, and venality of juſtice.

Interference of the crown in deciſions of law, and juſtice.

[67] Davila, p. 815. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 284.

[68] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 65.

Madame

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Madame de Senneterre, a lady of the court, againſt La Chatre, a gentleman attached to his brother, the duke of Anjou; and of conſequence, obnoxious to the king's favorites. So powerful a ſuitor did not exert his intereſt in vain; and La Chatre loſt his cauſe[69]. The royal guards, in May, 1582, broke open a priſon, by the king's order, and reſcued a follower of La Valette, detained for a capital crime[70]. Some years afterwards, de Ruſmenil, a gentleman of Picardy, accuſed of murder, having been conducted priſoner to the "Conciergerie," was taken from thence by force, at Henry's command, who was induced to commit the act, by the importunate requeſt of the duke of Joyeuſe[71]. During the courſe of his whole reign, he ſeems only to have conſidered the creation of legal employments, as a mode of impoſing taxes. The multiplication of them exceeded belief, and produced the moſt deplorable conſequences. Even the higheſt dignities of the law became venal. In 1580, for the firſt time, Bellievre, on the reſignation of his office of Preſident of the great chamber of the Parliament of Paris, received from his ſucceſſor, the attorney-general, the ſum of ſixty thouſand livres, or, about two thouſand, five hundred pounds, as a compenſation. Above ſixteen hundred pounds were given as the price of the vacant poſt of attorney-general, by Faye, a maſter of requeſts; who ſold his own to a third perſon, for near eleven hundred[72]. The people became the victims of theſe iniquitous proceedings. So avowed was the traffic of charges in the courts of judicature, that the prices were public and notorious: they appear to have riſen in value; no doubt, from the encreaſing profits annexed to their exerciſe. In Auguſt, 1584, the place of counſellor in the parliament of Paris ſold for three thouſand, five hundred crowns: thoſe of the criminal court of juſtice, called the "Chatelet," for two thouſand; and the maſterſhips of requeſts and accounts, from four to five thouſand crowns[73].

Creation of offices.

Sale of employments.

[69] Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 260.

[70] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 140.

[71] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 202.

[72] Ibid. p. 120.

[73] Ibid. p. 181.

It

It was in vain, that the celebrated chancellor, l'Hopital, under Charles the Ninth; one of the greateſt and moſt virtuous ſtateſmen whom France ever produced; endeavoured, by his exhortations and perſonal example, to check the torrent of venality. In an age and a court ſo corrupt, his reſiſtance could not effect a change in the national manners. All his writings prove the regret, as well as the indignation, which he felt, at the depravity of his countrymen. Placed on the higheſt eminence of the law, and holding in his hand the great ſeal; neither the dignity of his office, nor the incorruptibility which was demanded from it, could protect the ſanctuary of juſtice from invaſion and pollution. "I am torn," ſays he, in one of his epiſtles, "by the wolves and tigers who ſurround the king, who carry off the "patrimony of the ſtate, break down the moſt ſacred barriers, and "deſpiſe every conſideration, except their own intereſt[74]." The firſt nobility were not aſhamed to tamper with the inferior miniſters of the law, to ſolicit their favor, to buy their ſuffrages, and even perſonally to waſte whole days in ſo diſgraceful an occupation. "The "nobles," ſays l'Hopital, "forget the dignity of their rank ſo far, "as to place themſelves, before break of day, at the door of a vile "ſecretary; they accompany him to the court of law; remain near "him; expoſe themſelves to the inſults of the croud aſſembled "below the bar; and attend him in the evening to his own "houſe[75]." Nor did the men alone deſcend to theſe baſe and ſcandalous arts, to pervert the courſe of juſtice: ladies of the higheſt quality emulated them in rapacity, importunity, and ſolicitation. "The "moſt obſtinate conteſts," exclaims the ſame virtuous magiſtrate, in another place, "which I am obliged to maintain, are not againſt "the men: the women reſiſt much more ſtrongly, and do not ſo "eaſily abandon the ſtruggle[76]."

Ineffectual efforts of l'Hopital, to reform theſe abuſes.

Solicitations of the nobility.

Rapacity of the women of the court.

[74] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 235.
[75] Ibid. vol. i. p. 138.
[76] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Eclairciſſements, p. 17.

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If it could be neceſſary to confirm a teſtimony ſo unqueſtionable, the Memoirs of Tavannes contain ample proof of the enormities committed in all the provincial tribunals, as well as in thoſe of the capital [77]. "The doctors in law," ſays he, "have prolonged the "period of ſtudy, requiſite for entering on the diſcharge of judicial "functions, to ten years, in order to exclude the nobility from par-

Tribunals of law.

"ticipating in their enormous depredations."—"The number of "officers employed in the adminiſtration of juſtice and finance, do "not fall ſhort of fifty thouſand."—"All the judges, having pur-"chaſed their ſeats, make no ſcruple of receiving bribes circuitouſly, "which clerks, ſolicitors, and others, preſent to their wives and "ſervants [78]." Montluc pathetically laments, that the nobility, by diſdaining to occupy judicial, and municipal offices, as they had done at the beginning of the ſixteenth century, had thrown away one very eſſential ſource of conſideration and power [79]. It was not till the year 1560, in the States General held at Orleans, that a complete and total ſeparation was made between the long and the ſhort robe; or, in modern language, between the ſword and the gown. Previous to that æra, Bailiffs and Senechals, though not verſed in juriſprudence, or bred to the profeſſion of law as a ſcience, yet decided on queſtions of life and property [80].

Separation of the military, and judicial character.

Duration of ſuits of law.

The duration of ſuits was one of the moſt pernicious conſequences of the general corruption of juſtice; and the litigious ſpirit which diſtinguiſhed the times, rendered the evil more ſevere in its operation. All ranks of men were infected with it; and the chicane practiſed to protract deciſions, rendered the proceedings eternal. Families buried their whole eſtates in ruinous conteſts with each other, and paſſed their lives in ſoliciting, purchaſing, and corrupting the judges. L'Hopital draws a ſtriking and affecting picture of the

[77] Tavannes, p. 34.
[78] Ibid. p. 287.
[79] Memoires de Mont. vol. iv. p. 10.
[80] L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 648.

extent

extent of this calamiry [81]. Henry the Third, when he made the eloquent and pathetic harangue, with which he opened the States General, in 1588, inſiſts at great length upon the magnitude and enormity of the evils, proceeding from the delays and procraſtinations of courts of law; and recommends it as an object of the moſt ſerious attention to the national repreſentatives [82]. But, they were too deeply engaged in faction, to attempt the reformation of juſtice. CHAP. II.

Among the extraordinary crimes and abuſes practiſed in that age, to corrupt, or to pervert the courſe of juſtice, muſt be reckoned the fabrication of the great ſeal itſelf. A ſecretary of the court of chancery, named Mornat, aided by another accomplice, undertook to affix a counterfeit ſeal to the warrants iſſued. He executed it with ſo much dexterity and ſucceſs, that in a very ſhort ſpace of time, he acquired between five and ſix thouſand crowns. When diſcovered, he eſcaped the puniſhment due to his crime, by a precipitate flight into Germany; but, his confederate, leſs vigilant, was ſeized and executed. This event took place under Charles the Ninth, during the period when l'Hopital was chancellor [83]. Forgeries.

Confiſcations were another of the modes by which wealth was obtained, more ſafely, but, hardly more honorably, under the laſt princes of Valois. Henry the Second preſented to his miſtreſs, Diana de Poitiers, all the effects ſeized or ſequeſtered from the Hugonots, for hereſy. It amounted to a prodigious ſum; and the donation did not tend to retard, or diminiſh the proceedings againſt the Proteſtants [84]. Henry had given her, at his acceſſion, in 1547, the money ariſing from the confirmation of offices throughout France, which were always renewed at the commencement of every reign [85]. Under his ſon, Charles the Ninth, a new ſpecies of confiſcation was introduced by Gondi, marſhal de Retz, a Florentine; which long Confiſcations.

[81] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 137—144; and vol. ii. p. 56—62.

[82] De Thou, vol. x. p. 378 and 379, and p. 387.

[83] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 83—85.

[84] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 83.

[85] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 9 and 10.

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continued to be practiſed. Not only perſons convicted of treaſon, or other crimes of ſtate, but, men of every deſcription, were liable, at death, to have their houſes, property, and effects, ſeized on, by order of the crown, and raviſhed from their legal heirs, upon the ſlighteſt pretences. The old, rich, and infirm, were objects of unremitting attention to the rapacious courtiers; who often obtained a grant of their property, and kept a watchful eye upon their future prey. L'Hopital, at an early period of his life, introduces the cardinal of Lorrain, his patron, in one of his epiſtles, thus addreſſing him: "Obſerve the houſes of the dying, and on the firſt accident, write to me, "or come to me in perſon: be aſſured in that caſe, of the royal favor, "and of mine; but, take care, that no one more alert, anticipate you: "don't loſe ſight of the beds of the ſick[86]." When Mazille, firſt phyſician to Henry the Third, lay expiring, in 1578, the minions did not even wait till he was dead, to divide his ſpoils. Camus, a maſter of requeſts, was diſpatched to take an inventory of his effects, which was done in the preſence of the favorites to whom they were given. It does not appear, that Mazille had committed any ſort of crime, unleſs the one of being ſuſpected to lean towards the reformed religion. His only real crime conſiſted in his reputed wealth, which was eſtimated at ten thouſand crowns[87].

Seizure of private effects.

Examples of this practice.

The torture was indiſcriminately adminiſtered in the ſixteenth century, to priſoners of every rank, in its utmoſt violence, and at the arbitrary pleaſure of the magiſtrate. It was not even conſidered as any act of indecency, for ſovereigns to be preſent at ſuch a ſcene. Henry the Third, in 1582, aſſiſted, behind a curtain, during the depoſition of Salcede, who was put to the torture[88]. Not only kings, but, queens, and the ladies of the court, were accuſtomed to regard executions, as a ſpectacle of ſtate, which excited little emotion. The genius of the age, ſanguinary and ferocious, diminiſhed, if it did not extinguiſh the horror, naturally produced by the apparatus of

Torture.

Executions.

[86] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 87.
[87] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 101.
[88] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 636.

puniſh-

puniſhment and death. The public and magnificent entry of Henry the Second into Paris, in 1549, was ſolemnized by exhibitions of this nature. Several Hugonots expiated the crime of hereſy; and Henry was a ſpectator of their ſufferings. Florent Venot, one of them, had been previouſly confined for ſix weeks, in an engine, formed like a ſugar-loaf, and pointed at its baſe [89]. After the conſpiracy of Amboiſe, Francis the Second; his brothers, who were ſtill in a ſtate of childhood; and all the princeſſes and ladies aſſiſted, as at a pageant, when Caſtelnau, and his accomplices, were put to death. A platform was conſtructed under the windows of the caſtle, to facilitate the view of the ceremony [90]. That the ſentiments of compaſſion and terror, connected by nature with the ſight of a barbarous execution, could not be entirely ſubverted by cuſtom, or faſhion, is, notwithſtanding, evident, from the example of Leonora d'Humieres. She was the wife of William de Montmorenci, one of the younger ſons of the conſtable; and having gone, in March, 1563, together with the other ladies of the court, to ſee the execution of Poltrot, who was torn in pieces by horſes, on the "Place de "Greve," at Paris; ſhe was ſo overcome with her emotions, as to faint away, and expire ſoon afterwards [91].

The court aſſiſted at them.

It is equally clear, that the fate of this lady, the reſult of ſenſibility, did not produce any alteration in the mode of frequenting puniſhments. When Salcede, in 1582, ſuffered by the ſame ſpecies of death, which had been inflicted upon the aſſaſſin of Francis, duke of Guiſe; an apartment at the town-houſe, was fitted up, and ornamented expreſsly for the royal family [92]. Henry the Third, his queen, and Catherine of Medecis, were preſent at the performance [93]. The king not only regarded, but, directed the manner of it; and at the interceſſion of the ducheſs of Mercœur, who was allied to Salcede, he abbreviated that criminal's torments, by cauſing him to be ſtrangled [94].

Death of Salcede.

[89] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 75.
[90] Ibid. vol. i. p. 94.
[91] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 220.
[92] L'Etoile, p. 55.
[93] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 636.
[94] L'Etoile, p. 54 and 55. Buſbeq. letter 8th.

His

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His head was ſent to Antwerp; as that of Coligni, in 1572, if we may believe D'Aubigné, had been carried to Rome[95]. The embaſſador of Philip the Second having, with ſome acrimony, remonſtrated with Henry, on his ſending Salcede's head to be expoſed in a city, where he had not the ſmalleſt right to command as ſovereign; the king, ſomewhat embarraſſed, replied, "I have forwarded it to "my brother, to uſe his pleaſure reſpecting it; and to make pies "with it, if he pleaſes[96]." Hiſtory has not diſdained to commemorate, that the invention and uſe of gags is due to the age of which we are treating; and it is a characteriſtic circumſtance. They were firſt known in 1560, and uſed in Dauphiné, to prevent the Hugonot miniſters from exhorting, or converting the people[97].

Gags.

Univerſal venality.

It was not only in the magiſtracy, and all the courts of civil and criminal juſtice, that venality was introduced and eſtabliſhed. It had pervaded every department, and polluted every charge, or employment. De Thou juſtly attributes to ſo nefarious a practice, which excluded merit, talents, and ſervices, the univerſal depravity of manners under Henry the Third, and the final ruin of that prince's affairs. It had attained to a pitch of enormity, beyond which it ſeemed impoſſible to advance[98]. The higheſt offices of truſt and dignity, were publickly expoſed to ſale, without diſguiſe; and the ſovereign frequently purchaſed them of his own ſubjects and courtiers. When Joyeuſe was appointed governor of Normandy in 1583, he could not take poſſeſſion of the province, till he had bargained for the ceſſion of the principal cities and fortreſſes, with thoſe, to whom they had been committed. Exhauſted by the ſums requiſite to be expended, and unable to ſatisfy D'O, commander of the caſtle of Caen; Joyeuſe was neceſſitated, beſides paying a conſiderable part of the purchaſe in money, to place him in the poſt of ſuperintendant of the finances, from which he had been antecedently removed,

Examples. Joyeuſe.

[95] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 17.
[96] Buſbeq. p. 64. letter 9th.
[97] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 99.
[98] De Thou, vol. x. p. 676.

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for the moſt criminal malverſation and incapacity. Henry conſented to a transfer, ſo pernicious to his people [99]. In the following year, he condeſcended to importune the duke of Mayenne, to part with the office of admiral of France; which he likewiſe conferred upon Joyeuſe. Forty thouſand crowns were given for it; but, Mayenne expreſſed the utmoſt reluctance to comply, and only did ſo in the laſt extremity. His brother, the duke of Guiſe, withſtood all the ſolicitations of the king, and peremptorily refuſed to quit, or ſell, on any conditions, the charge which he occupied, of lord-ſteward of the houſehold [100].

Mayenne.

Guiſe.

The inferior officers imitated the example of the great. Henry, king of Navarre, having demanded, in 1589, at the time of his treaty with the crown, a place of ſecurity upon the Loire, for the paſſage of his troops, it became requiſite to cede to him either Saumur, or the Pont de Cé. But, Coſſeins, who commanded in the latter fortreſs, refuſed to evacuate it, for a ſmaller ſum, than a penſion of fifty thouſand crowns. De Leſſart, governor of Saumur, was not ſo unreaſonable; and in order to render him more accommodating, the king of Navarre did not heſitate to offer, nor De Leſſart bluſh to accept, a bribe of three thouſand crowns [101]. Even the priſoners whom Henry had arreſted at Blois, after the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes; and whom he had entruſted to Le Guaſt, a captain in his guards, governor of Amboiſe; he was reduced to purchaſe again of his own officer, within a few weeks. Such was the faithleſs and venal temper of the age. Fifteen thouſand crowns were paid to Le Guaſt, from the royal treaſury, for the perſons of the cardinal of Bourbon, the prince of Joinville, ſon to the late duke of Guiſe, and the duke of Elbeuf. He was likewiſe permitted to retain, and to appropriate to himſelf, the ranſoms to be derived from the liberty of the archbiſhop of Lyons, and ſeveral other captives, who remained in his poſſeſſion [102]. "I have ſeen," ſays Tavannes, "eight or ten govern-

Governments.

Priſoners.

Pernicious effects of thoſe practices.

[99] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 80.
[100] Davila, p. 500.
[101] De Thou, vol. x. p. 591.
[102] Ibid. p. 509 and 510.

"ments

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" ments propoſed to be ſold, in order to form a party againſt the ſo-
" vereign himſelf: the buyers felt no ſcruple in defrauding the ſol-
" diers of their pay, and in laying exactions upon the merchants and
" people, in order to reimburſe themſelves the intereſt of their
" money [103]." Such was the total diſſolution of all authority, or obedience, that ſubjects preſumed even to impoſe regular contributions in the provinces, by virtue of their ſole mandate. Buſſy d'Amboiſe, when commanding in the caſtle of Angers, in 1579, which conſtituted part of the eſtabliſhment of the duke of Anjou; was accuſtomed to exact very heavy taxes from the citizens, and from the inhabitants of the duchy, frequently without conſulting, or obtaining permiſſion either from the duke his maſter, or from the king [104]. It would be eaſy to cite ſimilar inſtances of oppreſſion, committed under a reign, when the facility, prodigality, and apathy of the prince, encouraged every abuſe; when impunity accompanied the greateſt crimes; and when the deſpotiſm of the crown was the ſmalleſt evil, to which the unhappy people were expoſed.

Abuſes and oppreſſions.

[103] Tavannes, p. 266.

[104] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 90.

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State of the Gallican church.—Immunities of the clergy.—Revenues.—Taxes, levied on the eccleſiaſtical property.—Alienations.—Abuſes.—Pluralities.—Sale of preferments.—Depravity of the great eccleſiaſtics.—Inſtitution of the penitents.—Proceſſions.—Seditious ſermons.—Aſylums.—State of the Hugonots.—Internal form of their civil government.—Numbers and reſources.—Military, and naval force.—Commerce.—Intolerance of the age.—Mutual acts of violence and cruelty, between Catholics and Proteſtants.—Perverſion of the human mind, on matters of religion.—Examples of toleration.—State of the king of Navarre.—His territories, power, and reſources.—Court of Navarre.

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State of the church.

THE Catholic church, in whatever point of view we conſider it, whether with regard to its ſpiritual authority, its immunities, or its revenues, was an object of the firſt magnitude and conſideration, during the ſixteenth century. Notwithſtanding the vaſt defalcation from the poſſeſſions of the ſee of Rome, occaſioned by the revolt of Luther; the Papal power continued ſtill to be extremely ample and formidable, in all the countries which perſiſted to acknowledge its ſupremacy. The French hierarchy might be ſaid, in ſome meaſure, to conſtitute a monarchy within the ſtate itſelf; governed by its own laws; amenable to its own juriſdiction; contributing from its proper and diſtinct reſources; and profeſſing obedience to a diſtant and ſuperior ſovereign. Although, from the reſiſtance made by the Parliaments, the decrees of the council of Trent, which declared the independance of the clergy on the civil magiſtrate, and the inability of the crown to tax the eccleſiaſtical property, had

Eccleſiaſtical power.

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had never been publiſhed, nor recognized in France; yet, the validity of thoſe regulations was not the leſs rigorouſly aſſerted by the Romiſh pontiffs. The age itſelf was by no means liberated from, or ſuperior to, the influence of a ſuperſtitious veneration for the ſacerdotal office and character; nor had the thunders of the Vatican ceaſed to unnerve the arm of princes, and to ſuſpend their boldeſt determinations. It is difficult, or impoſſible to mark the preciſe limits of a power, which, in an eſpecial degree, was founded on opinion, and maintained by religious terror; but, we may pronounce, that, however on its decline, it continued ſtill to operate, and to affect the deliberations of the wiſeſt and moſt vigorous cabinets. When Sixtus the fifth, in the inſolence of the apoſtolic authority, publiſhed an excommunication againſt Henry the Third, in 1589, that prince was ſo deeply wounded by it, that he could neither be induced to eat or drink, for more than forty hours. Univerſal ſadneſs and dejection appeared in the army, even while advancing rapidly and proſperouſly towards Paris. Their operations were ſlackened; and all the efforts of the archbiſhop of Bourges to diminiſh the king's uneaſineſs, were ineffectual. He complained, that the emperor Charles the Fifth, who had impiouſly ſacked Rome, and detained in priſon the ſacred perſon of the Pope himſelf, had not been ſo ſeverely treated. "But, ſire," replied the king of Navarre, "that monarch "was victorious: if we conquer, the cenſures will be revoked: if "we are worſted by the enemy, we ſhall all die excommunicated[1]." Even in the article of death, Boulogne, Henry's chaplain, would not give him abſolution, till he had ſolemnly profeſſed his reſolution to obey the Papal mandate, and to releaſe the cardinal of Bourbon and the archbiſhop of Lyons, though their liberation ſhould coſt him his life and crown[2]. Scarcely greater deference could have been manifeſted for the pontifical character and orders, in the darkeſt period of the middle ages.

Papal authority, and conſideration.

[1] Davila, p. 811. [2] Davila, p. 818. De Thou, vol. x. p. 673.

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Immunities of the clergy.

The immunities and privileges of the clergy, were not only ample, but, a degree of ſanctity ſurrounded, and protected them from invaſion. Superſtition, more powerful than any written law, withheld the ſword of juſtice, and arreſted the dagger of the aſſaſſin. Prelates and cardinals were regarded as beings ſeparated from the maſs of mankind, and as hardly amenable to any ſecular tribunal. When Henry embraced the determination of ſacrificing the duke of Guiſe, inſtruments of his vengeance were readily found; but, it was much more difficult to procure men who would imbrue their hands in the blood of a member of the ſacred college. Recourſe was had to inferior miniſters, for the purpoſe. Four common ſoldiers, each of whom received fifty crowns, diſpatched him with their halberds, on the refuſal of the band of forty-five, compoſed of gentlemen, to perpetrate a deed, eſteemed ſo impious [3]. It was not for the murder of the duke, but, for that of the cardinal, that the indignation of the holy ſee was manifeſted; and while Sixtus treated the former as an act of ſtate, excuſed, if not juſtified by the circumſtances which produced it, he affected to conſider the death of one cardinal, and the detention of another, as a crime equally enormous and irremiſſible [4].

Their ſuppoſed ſanctity.

Nor were the great eccleſiaſtics protected only in their lives and freedom, by the privileges of the order to which they belonged. They pretended to be exempt from appearing, or anſwering before any court, except that of Rome, even in caſes of treaſon. The archbiſhop of Lyons, arreſted as an accomplice of the Guiſes, in December, 1588, refuſed to anſwer interrogatories, and pleaded his ſuperiority to any temporal, or ſpiritual juriſdiction in France. Henry aſſembled the privy council; and they determined, on the ſtrength of many weighty precedents, that as the crime laid to his charge exceeded the powers annexed to the eccleſiaſtical judges, he might be brought before the civil Magiſtrate. The archbiſhop perſiſted nevertheleſs in

Exemption from ordinary juriſdiction.

[3] Davila, p. 751. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 259. De Thou, vol. x. p. 478.
[4] Davila, p. 770.

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his ſilence, and declined acknowledging the right either of the parliament, the peers, or the ſovereign, to bring him to trial[5]. We may judge of the dangerous and unlimited nature of the clerical pretenſions, in that age, by the famous decree of the Sorbonne. A college compoſed of only ſixty doctors in theology, conſulted by the heads of the League, in January, 1589, had the audacity to declare the oath of allegiance void, and to authorize the aſſumption of arms againſt their legitimate prince. So bold and unanimous a deciſion had no inconſiderable effect in exciting, and confirming the rebellion, which took place throughout the kingdom[6].

College of the Sorbonne. Its weight.

Powers and pretenſions ſo vaſt and undefined, were ſuſtained by adequate revenues. It is difficult, if not impoſſible, to form any accurate eſtimate of the value of the lands poſſeſſed by the church, throughout France; but, we know that they included a large proportion of all the property of the country, together with extenſive feudal authority over their vaſſals. A Proteſtant writer of the time of Henry the Third, aſſerts, that they produced twenty millions of livres, or near nine hundred thouſand pounds, annual income. He adds, that France contained ſix hundred and fifty abbies, of the orders of St. Bernard and St. Benedict; beſides above two thouſand, five hundred priories[7]. In ſome inſtances, the epiſcopal juriſdiction ſeemed to have arrogated, or extinguiſhed the functions moſt inſeparable from royalty. The biſhops of Mende in the province of the Gevaudan, enjoyed by antient preſcription and agreement, the right of parity with the ſovereign. Juſtice was adminiſtered in their joint names, and the biſhop ſtruck money, as an independant prince[8]. It is, however, unqueſtionable, that the French kings claimed and exerciſed the right of levying taxes from the clergy of their dominions; and it is equally certain, that the latter virtually acknowledged, by their ſubmiſſion, the validity of the royal prerogative. Four tenths, or "decimes," con-

Revenues of the clergy.

Civil power.

Taxes levied on eccleſiaſtics.

[5] De Thou, vol. x. p. 480 and 481.

[6] Ibid. p. 511 and 512. Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 361, 362.

[7] La Noue, p. 357.

[8] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 601.

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ſtituted the ordinary annual contribution, under the three laſt kings of the houſe of Valois [9]. To what ſum they amounted, it is hard to ſay; but, we may conclude, that they did not fall ſhort of nine hundred thouſand livres a year, or, about forty thouſand pounds; becauſe we find that between 1560 and 1575, including fifteen years, the crown had drawn from the order of eccleſiaſtics, full fifteen millions of livres [10].

Extraordinary aids.

Beſides theſe regular impoſitions, extraordinary aids were frequently demanded, and obtained. Two, three, and even four "decimes" were, on particular occaſions, exacted from the clergy, above the cuſtomary contribution, without any application being made to the ſee of Rome for its approbation; and without any attempt on the part of the church to refuſe obedience, or to withhold payment [11]. The Romiſh pontiffs, unable to prevent, did not the leſs reſiſt and deny the right of the crown, to draw any pecuniary aid whatever from the clergy, even under the moſt preſſing national calamities, unleſs by the Papal grant and permiſſion. That the pretenſion, however arrogant and abſurd, was not altogether viſionary or deſtitute of exiſtence, is not to be denied; ſince, in 1582, Henry the Third, having demanded and obtained one "decime" only, beyond the ordinary number; made, by his embaſſador at the court of Rome, the ſtrongeſt exertions to obtain the diſpenſation of Gregory the Thirteenth, for thus invading the eccleſiaſtical property. He urged, that it was indiſpenſable, as he was on the point of renewing the alliance with the Helvetic confederacy; and could not conclude it, without paying the arrears of the penſions due to the Switzers, and making the accuſtomed preſents to the Cantons. Theſe reaſons, however plauſible, or ſolid, produced no impreſſion on the pontiff, who pertinaciouſly refuſed to give any ſanction to a proceeding, derogatory to the power of the Papal ſee, and to the independance of the French clergy on the crown. He even founded his refuſal, on the indirect approval, which his con-

Reſiſtance of the popes to the taxation of the clergy.

[9] Lettres de Paul de Foix, lettre 49, p. 539.

[10] Near ſix hundred and fifty thouſand pounds ſterling. De Thou, vol. vii. p. 296.

[11] Lettres de Foix, p. 539.

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ſent to levy a fifth "decime" might be conſtrued to convey, of the right in the kings of France to exact the four, annually received. Henry, however, did not fail to levy the tax in queſtion [12].

Alienation of the lands of the church.

But, although the royal power was competent to compel the eccleſiaſtical body to contribute, like the other ſubjects, ordinarily, and extraordinarily, towards the wants of the ſtate; there was another ſpecies of contribution, ſometimes demanded from the clergy, to which the crown was totally inadequate to enforce ſubmiſſion, without the expreſs and formal conſent of the ſovereign pontiffs. Even the ſanction of the Parliaments and States General could not give it efficacy, if the ſupreme head of the church withheld his permiſſion. The alienation of the domain, or lands belonging to the clergy, was a reſource, to which the calamities and poverty, produced by the civil wars, neceſſitated the French kings to apply, more than once. There were no leſs than five diſtinct and ſeparate alienations of the temporalities of the church, between the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth, in 1560, and the cloſe of his brother's reign, in 1589; and we cannot eſtimate their aggregate amount, at a ſmaller annual ſum than two hundred thouſand crowns [13]. It is not ſo eaſy to aſcertain the ſum of money levied by the ſale of the lands; more particularly, as in the diſordered ſtate of the finances, every peculation was practiſed with impunity. A bull from the court of Rome was publiſhed, to give validity to each of the acts of alienation; and Pius the Fifth, when he ſignified his aſſent, in 1568, to one, for ſelling lands to the value of twenty-five thouſand crowns a year, annexed to it the clauſe, that "the money could only be employed againſt the Proteſtants [14]." His ſucceſſor, Gregory the Thirteenth, peremptorily refuſed the duke of Joyeuſe, deputed for that purpoſe, to allow of any diminution of the eccleſiaſtical property [15]. Even, after the Papal approbation obtained by Henry the Third, in 1586, for alienating fifty thouſand

Papal approbation, indiſpenſable.

[12] Lettres de Foix, p. 534—542, and 552—554.

[13] L'Etoile, p. 89 and 90. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 293. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 52 and 53.

[14] Trad. de l'Hop. ibid.

[15] Buſbeq. letter 24. p. 154.

crowns

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crowns of the church revenues; the clergy, by the mouth of the biſhop of Noyon, as their repreſentative, did not heſitate to make the boldeſt reclamations againſt the royal tyranny; and to ſtate as a crime, that the French princes, ſince the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, had pretended to make the eccleſiaſtics tributary. The harangue was pronounced before the parliament of Paris; and though it excited the indignation of that court, yet no reſentment ſeems to have been expreſſed by the king, for ſo extraordinary a reſiſtance to his edicts [16].

Reſiſtance of the clergy.

Enormous abuſes, of various kinds, had crept into the Gallican church, during the courſe of the ſixteenth century; and they naturally augmented under ſo profligate and licentious a reign, as that of the laſt of the princes of Valois. In 1579, no leſs than twenty-eight biſhopricks were vacant, the temporalities of which were poſſeſſed by laymen, and where the ſervice was altogether neglected. In ſome provinces, ſcarcely a biſhop was to be found, who reſided in his dioceſe; and the abbeys were in the ſame predicament [17]. A commiſſion, armed with very ample powers of enquiry, and authorized to puniſh, or to redreſs all miſconduct in eccleſiaſtics of every rank, was ſent from the crown, throughout France, in that year. But, it may be much doubted, whether the attempt was productive of reform or benefit [18]. The practice of naming gentlemen, ſoldiers, and children, to church preferments, was not only common; but, ſanctioned by the ſee of Rome, in many inſtances. We find Gregory the Thirteenth, though otherwiſe a pontiff of decent, and even ſevere manners, yet permitting theſe nominations. In 1582, he confirmed the grand prior of Champagne, a knight of Malta, in the abbey of La Trappe [19]. It is true, that he objected to naming a monk, whom the French embaſſador recommended, to the biſhoprick of Agde in Languedoc, becauſe it was notorious, that the revenues of the ſee had

Abuſes.

Nomination of laics, to benefices.

[16] L'Etoile, p. 89 and 90.
[17] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 93.
[18] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 607.
[19] Lettres de Foix, p. 256 and 257.

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been, for many years, ſequeſtered to the uſe of marſhal Montmorenci. But, he voluntarily propoſed to confirm the ſame monk in the epiſcopal dignity, and to aſſign a conſiderable portion of the temporalities to a natural ſon of Montmorenci [20]. Brantome, ſo celebrated for his Memoirs, which ſufficiently prove him to have been a diſſolute courtier, deſtitute of morals; was provided by Henry the Second, with the abbey of his own name, in the province of Perigord. "The king gave it me," ſays he, "when I was very "young, in recompence for my brother's head, which was carried "off by a cannon ball, at the ſiege of Heſdin. I have always "governed it ſo well, that in three changes of abbots, ſucceſſively "named by the kings of France, and confirmed by the popes, no "fault has been found. It is only worth three thouſand livres an-"nual revenue, of which I am obliged to give conſiderably more "than half to the abbot, who is, likewiſe, compelled to pay very large "taxes, and to make conſiderable repairs. One of my abbots, a moſt "worthy man, was poiſoned; but, the king, underſtanding that I "was ſtill alive, refuſed to diſpoſe of the abbey [21]." Theſe eccleſiaſtical preferments were conſidered by the ſovereign, as a mode of providing for the gentlemen, and officers, who grew old in the military ſervice, or in attendance on the court. They were frequently conferred on men of letters. Philibert de Lorme, the architect of the Tuilleries, was rewarded with a donation of the abbey of Livry, in the vicinity of Paris [22]. Ronſard, the poet, received from the bounty of Charles the Ninth, the priory of St. Come in Touraine, at which he died [23]. Deſportes, who was equally beloved by Henry, his brother, poſſeſſed the three abbeys of Joſaphat, Bonport, and Vanne [24]. In 1588, Henry the Third recommended to the States, in his ſpeech from the throne, the reformation of an abuſe, which ſavoured ſo ſtrongly of impiety [25].

Inſtances.

[20] Lettres de Foix, letter 52, p. 580.

[21] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 264—267.

[22] Vie de Ronſard, p. 144.

[23] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 413.

[24] L'Etoile, p. 88. Journal d'Henry IV. vol. i. p. 157.

[25] De Thou, vol. x. p. 387.

Profa-

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Profanations.

Profanations far greater were committed, if we may credit the beſt contemporary writers. Ladies became poſſeſſed of dignities or benefices in the church. The council of ſtate was not aſhamed, in 1579, to adjudge a biſhoprick to a woman of diſtinction; and they were regarded as conſtituting a portion of inheritance, in families [26]. Children received them, while ſtill in infancy [27]. In the firſt year of his reign, Henry the Third, on his arrival in France, from Poland, conferred the two epiſcopal ſees, of Amiens and Grenoble, vacant by the death of the cardinal of Crequy, on du Gua, one of his favorites, who had the profligacy to diſpoſe of them again by ſale: for the former, he procured near thirteen hundred pounds; and for the latter, above ſeventeen hundred [28]. The decency and dignity of religion were hardly leſs attacked, by the pluralities common among the great eccleſiaſtics. We cannot, without aſtoniſhment, read of the number of preferments held by one perſon, who was often a foreigner, or reſident in other countries. Hyppolito, cardinal of Ferrara, held eight abbeys in different parts of France [29]. The famous cardinal du Bellay, who died at Rome, in 1560, was archbiſhop of Bourdeaux, and biſhop of Paris, Mans, and Limoges [30]. Beſides the archiepiſcopal ſee of Rheims, and the biſhoprick of Metz, the cardinal of Lorrain was poſſeſſed of many abbeys and inferior benefices [31].

Sale of biſhopricks.

Pluralities.

The vices naturally connected with wealth, characterized the ſuperior clergy, and completed, by their bad example, the general diſſolution of manners. Louis, cardinal of Guiſe, who died in 1578, was notorious for debaucheries, epicuriſm, and gluttony [32]. From his inordinate love of wine, he was commonly called in deriſion, "Le Car-"dinal des Boutailles." Of his nephew, the ſecond cardinal of Guiſe, put to death at Blois, Sixtus the Fifth himſelf ſaid, that "he had no-"thing of a cardinal, except the hat." Not ſatisfied with diſgracing his profeſſion by every ſpecies of profligacy and immorality; he did

Diſſolution of manners.

Examples.

[26] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 93 and 94.
[27] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 97.
[28] Ibid. p. 47 and 48.
[29] Le Lab. ſur Caſſ. vol. i. p. 759.
[30] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 18.
[31] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 278.
[32] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 645. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 91.

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not hesitate to put himself at the head of four hundred lancemen, and to engage in enterprizes equally sanguinary and treasonable [33]. The duke of Epernon reproached the archbishop of Lyons, in the presence of the king himself, with living in an open state of incestuous commerce with his own sister, and making a shameful traffic of every thing sacred in his diocese. So avowed were the facts, that the prelate did not even pretend to deny them, although he resented their disclosure [34]. Du Perron, who rose by his talents and graces, to the highest dignities of the Romish church, made no scruple of prostituting his genius, to immortalize the profligate and adulterous amours of Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre. In 1574, he composed some elegant verses, at that princess's request, in the nature of a monody, upon the death of her lover, La Mole, executed by order of Charles the Ninth [35]. Nine years afterwards, in November, 1583, the same ecclesiastic, assisting at the table of the king, where a croud of courtiers were present; maintained, by many solid arguments, the existence of a Deity, and demonstrated the folly of Atheism. Pleased with his discourse, Henry commended it with the warmest marks of approbation. "Sire," said du Perron, "I have to-day, proved that there "is a God: to-morrow, if it shall please your majesty to grant me "audience, I will evince, by reasons equally good, that there is none." Dissolute and relaxed as was Henry the Third in certain parts of his conduct, he expressed the utmost horror at such a proposition, and commanded du Perron instantly to quit his presence [36].

Du Perron.

Impiety of his conduct.

We may see in the manifesto of marshal Montmorenci, published in November, 1574, to what a point the vices of the great ecclesiastics had infected the whole order, and how total was the abandonment and venality of the clergy throughout France [37]. The depravity of the monastic orders was not less notorious. In 1577, a common prostitute was discovered in the convent of the Cordeliers, at Paris, who had remained ten years concealed among those holy

Depravity and abuses.

[33] Lettre du Car. de Joyeuse, dans les Mem. de Villeroi, vol. ii. p. 209—211. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 111.

[34] De Thou, vol. x. p. 238. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 183 and 184.

[35] Vie de Marg. p. 137.

[36] L'Etoile, p. 73.

[37] Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 134.

fathers.

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fathers [38]. Under the reigns of the three ſons of Henry the Second, it was not uncommon to ſee prelates of the higheſt rank, who continued to retain their preferments, though well known to have renounced the Catholic religion. Brantome enumerates ſeveral, who did not ceaſe to exerciſe the epiſcopal functions, after embracing Calviniſm, or Lutheraniſm [39]. Odet de Chatillon, brother to Coligni, a cardinal, archbiſhop of Toulouſe, and biſhop of Beauvais, not only perſiſted to hold thoſe dignities after he had become a Hugonot; but, he publickly ſolemnized his marriage with a lady of the court. She was even received as his wife, in the drawing-room of Catherine of Medecis; and was ſeated in the preſence of the queen-mother, as a peereſs, in her quality of counteſs of Beauvais. The common people denominated her "Madame la Cardinale [40]." Theſe relaxations of diſcipline were, however, reluctantly tolerated by the French kings, from motives of policy, or neceſſity.

Inſtitution of the penitents.

A phenomenon, reſerved for the time of Henry the Third, was the appearance and inſtitution of the penitents. In the beginning of his reign, during his ſtay at Avignon, in 1574, he firſt ſaw, and aſſociated himſelf to the confraternity. There were three ſorts, diſtinguiſhed by their reſpective colors. Thoſe of the king, were white; thoſe of the queen-mother, black; and the blue belonged to the cardinal of Armagnac. Catherine of Medecis, and even the young king of Navarre, afterwards Henry the Fourth, mixed in theſe cavalcades, covered with a ſack. The cardinal of Lorrain loſt his life by following their example, bareheaded, and barefoot; he was ſeized in conſequence, with a violent fever on the brain, of which he expired [41]. Notwithſtanding the king's natural propenſity to encourage ſuch mummeries, by his preſence and exhortations; yet, the manly and ſpirited remonſtrances of Chriſtopher de Thou, firſt preſident of

Oppoſition made to them.

[38] L'Etoile, p. 26 and 27.

[39] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 262, and p. 263; and vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 258 and 259.

[40] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 354—356. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 37.

[41] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 164 and 165. L'Etoile, p. 9 and 10.

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the Parliament of Paris, prevented their complete reception and eſtabliſhment, for ſeveral years. That able and upright magiſtrate repreſented to his ſovereign, the pernicious tendency of ceremonies, only calculated to extinguiſh, among the lower orders, the ſpirit of real piety, diſcipline, and obedience to the civil authority. It was not till after his deceaſe, that Henry, in the following year, 1583, yielding to his inclinations, inſtituted a confraternity of penitents at Paris; gave them rules; and rendered them permanent. It is hard to ſay, whether devotion, hypocriſy, or weakneſs of mind, were the predominant movements, by which he was influenced; but, it can admit of no doubt, that the inſtitution tended to degrade and vilify him in the eſtimation of his ſubjects, and of mankind[42].

Prelates, noblemen, members of the long robe, and citizens, were all admitted and invited to become members of the ſociety of Penitents.

Their dreſs. Their dreſs was a ſort of ſack, which concealed completely the wearer, leaving only two holes cut in the hood, in order to enable him to ſee his way. On the left ſhoulder, was a croſs of white ſattin. White linen compoſed the materials of the ſack itſelf, and it deſcended to the feet[43]. Wrapt in this diſguiſe, Henry the Third marched in ſlow

Proceſſions. proceſſion, through the principal ſtreets of his own capital, undiſtinguiſhed from the other penitents. During the remainder of his reign, the ceremony was continually repeated; and it laſted during the greater part of the night, accompanied with muſic, and followed by multitudes of people. Cardinals, minions, magiſtrates, and perſons of every deſcription, compoſed the cavalcade, which was not exempt from many diſorders and indecencies[44]. It ſeems ſcarcely credible, that the king ſhould voluntarily debaſe the majeſty of the throne ſo far, as to go on foot, in the habit of a penitent, from Paris to Chartres, and return in the ſame groteſque diſguiſe, accompanied by about ſixty of

[42] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 68 and 69. L'Etoile, p. 64—67.

[43] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 32 and 33.

[44] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 32—34. L'Etoile, p. 64—67. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 46.

his

his companions. He performed this ſpecies of pilgrimage, in March, 1586[45]. Felix Perretti, who had raiſed himſelf from the condition of a private monk, to the chair of St. Peter; could not reſtrain the emotions of his contempt, at a conduct ſo unworthy of a great monarch. "I have done my utmoſt," ſaid he, "to liberate myſelf "from the monaſtic profeſſion; and the king of France exerts his "endeavours to enter into it." Even the pages and lacqueys of the court were ſenſible to the ridicule attending the proceſſions of penitents; and Henry cauſed near a hundred and twenty of them, who had counterfeited the ceremony and the dreſs, to be ſeverely chaſtized in the kitchens of the Louvre[46].

Pilgrimages.

Ridicule of them.

So contagious, notwithſtanding, was the example exhibited by the ſovereign, and ſo diſpoſed was the age to every ſort of ſuperſtition; that the people in the provinces ſpeedily imitated the model of the capital. Their paſſion for exerciſes of devotion and auſterity, was greatly encreaſed, by the ravages of a peſtilential diſtemper, which deſolated France in 1583. Crouds of penitents arrived at Paris, from the neighbouring diſtricts. On the 10th of September, between eight and nine hundred perſons, of both ſexes, many of whom had not attained to years of maturity, entered the metropolis. All of them were diſguiſed in ſacks, bearing in their hands, either lighted tapers, or wooden croſſes; and conducted by two gentlemen on horſeback, with their wives in a coach, habited in a ſimilar manner[47]. Five other companies of penitents followed, in the courſe of the ſame month; and ſuch was the inconceivable frenzy, which manifeſted itſelf throughout the kingdom, that ten or twelve thouſand are ſaid to have viſited the ſhrine of "our lady of Lieſſe," near Rheims, who were principally natives of the Ardennes[48].

Superſtition of the people.

Provincial proceſſions.

[45] L'Etoile, p. 90 and 91.

[46] Buſbeq. letter 8th, p. 116 and 117. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 160.

[47] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 168. L'Etoile, p. 71. Buſbeq. letter 25, p. 158 and 159.

[48] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. ibid.

Notwith-

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Paſſion of Henry the Third, for theſe obſervances.

Notwithſtanding the general contempt which Henry incurred by practices ſo unbecoming his ſtation, he perſiſted in his adherence to them during his whole life. It was a mark of peculiar favor to be admitted, or allowed, to wear the uniform of the penitents; and the young nobility emulated the diſtinction, as an omen of their future elevation [49]. The king, not ſatisfied with his public devotions, was accuſtomed to retire at ſtated intervals, to the convent which he had conſtructed in the wood of the caſtle of Vincennes; where, immured with his companions of the order of the Hieronimites, he ſeemed to lay down the functions of a prince, and to aſſume thoſe of a recluſe. He carried the monaſtic rage to ſuch a length, as to deliver, himſelf, in perſon, the ſermon, or exhortation, on particular occaſions [50]. When we reflect on theſe extraordinary marks of puerile or degrading ſuperſtition, we are almoſt led to queſtion the ſanity of his intellects; and it cannot excite amazement, that the League ſhould have formed the project of immuring him for life, in a monaſtery. The vices of which he was too juſtly ſuſpected, and which his retirements were calculated to favor, or conceal, rendered him not only odious, but, contemptible. It is well known, that the ducheſs of Montpenſier wore, when in the royal preſence, a pair of golden ſciſſars, at her girdle, with which ſhe did not ſcruple to declare, that ſhe hoped to perform the operation of the tonſure on the king, holding his head between her kees [51]. He had aſſumed for his device, two crowns, in alluſion to thoſe of France and of Poland, with the motto,

Contempt, incurred by them.

"Manet ultima cœlo."

In deriſion, the League cauſed the following diſtich to be compoſed:

"Qui dedit ante duas, unam abſtulit; altera nutat;
"Tertia, tonſoris eſt facienda manu [52]."

Similar inſtitutions.

Beſides the order of penitents, Henry inſtituted, in May, 1585, a private confraternity, called "the Society of the Brothers of Death;"

[49] Sully, vol. i. p. 40.
[50] L'Etoile, p. 88.
[51] De Thou, vol. x. p. 445.
[52] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 199.

of which he had ſeen the model among the Poles, during his ſhort reſidence in that country. Only twenty-one members, or brothers, were admitted into the company, named by the king: their dreſs was black; and the ſtatutes, compoſed by him likewiſe, betray a gloomy, eccentric, and diſordered imagination[53]. Never was any period more deeply tinctured with ſuperſtition, or more deſtitute of real piety and morality.

Proceſſion of the penitents to Chartres.

But, the moſt groteſque and ſingular exhibition, preſented under this reign, was the proceſſion of penitents, deputed by the Pariſians, in May, 1588, to wait on Henry at Chartres, with a view of deprecating his reſentment, and perſuading him to return to the metropolis. The circumſtances are ſo incredible, that if we did not receive them from an eye-witneſs, and an hiſtorian of equal gravity and veracity, they could ſcarcely obtain belief. Nothing can more forcibly depicture the genius and character of the age, when ſuch indecent and ſcandalous profanations were frequent, and excited neither horror, nor diſguſt. Thirty-five brothers of the order of the penitents, followed by a vaſt croud of other perſons, barefoot, were conducted by the count of Bouchage, brother to the duke of Joyeuſe, killed at Coutras; and who had, in the courſe of the preceding year, embraced the monaſtic profeſſion. He was induced, in order to awaken the ſympathy or compaſſion of the king, to repreſent, on this occaſion, the perſon of our Saviour aſcending Mount Calvary. His head was encircled with a crown of thorns; and on his forehead were painted drops of blood. His hands were tied behind him; while on his ſhoulder he bore, or dragged, a long croſs of painted paſteboard, under the oppreſſive weight of which he appeared to be ſinking. At intervals, he threw himſelf upon the ground, uttering lamentable groans. Two young Capuchin Friars, on each ſide of him, appeared in the characters of the Virgin Mary, and of the Magdalen. Four others, wildly attired, held the cords, with which the

Deſcription of that ceremony.

[53] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 47—51.

prin-

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principal actor was bound; and with their ſcourges, frequently inflicted on his back, a ſevere diſcipline. Accuſtomed as Henry was, and partial as he might be eſteemed, to ſuch ſpectacles, he felt the impiety and profanation attached to a mockery of one of the moſt ſacred myſteries of religion: he even reproached Bouchage with his credulity and zeal, which rendered him an inſtrument in the hands of the League; many of whoſe adherents had the audacity to mix in the cavalcade, diſguiſed under the penitential ſack [54].

Religious proceſſions.

Proceſſions of every kind, intended either to conciliate the divine favor, or to deprecate its wrath, characterized the reign of the laſt of the princes of Valois. They were encouraged, and uſually conducted, by the cardinal of Bourbon; a weak and ſuperſtitious prelate, who acted a diſtinguiſhed, though only a ſubordinate part, in the troubles, cauſed by the ambition of the houſe of Guiſe. In July, 1587, he headed a proceſſion at Paris, compoſed of perſons of both ſexes, and of every age, in which the ſeven ſhrines of St. Germain were carried by men in their ſhirts, without other dreſs. Torches of wax were borne by all the aſſiſtants. Henry, at a moment when cares of ſtate ought to have occupied his whole attention, and when foreign armies conſpiring with domeſtic enemies, were preparing to deſolate his dominions; was not aſhamed to mix in ſo motley a cavalcade, habited as a penitent, and to commend the order of its march [55]. Crouds of devotees, from Champagne, Picardy, and Lorrain, dreſſed in white, and ornamented with croſſes; quitting their occupations, and abandoning the cultivation of the country, continued to arrive in the capital. They were highly ſubſervient to the deſigns of the duke of Guiſe, who, under ſhelter of the concealment, contrived to introduce his partizans, and to prepare for the inſurrection which ſoon afterwards took place [56].

Political conſequences of them.

[54] De Thou, cited by d'Anquetil, in the Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 30—33. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 61 and 62. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 248.

[55] L'Etoile, p. 101 and 102. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 654.

[56] De Thou, ibid.

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During the period of about ſeven months, which intervened between the aſſaſſination of that prince at Blois, and the death of the king himſelf; when the minds of men were inflamed beyond meaſure, from the events of the moment; the rage for proceſſions attained to its higheſt point. It ſeemed almoſt to partake of frenzy, among the Pariſians, and to have perverted the exerciſe of reaſon. The people roſe in multitudes, during the night; and, notwithſtanding the ſeverity of the ſeaſon, clamorouſly compelled the prieſts and curates to lead them in proceſſion. Even the rigor of the weather did not induce them to wear any clothes; and they paraded through the ſtreets, in their ſhirts only, inſenſible to every impediment [37]. The moſt libertine, and ſcandalous exceſſes, were committed with impunity, under the protection of the darkneſs, in theſe promiſcuous aſſemblies, compoſed of men, women, and children. Ladies of gallantry found them too convenient, not to profit of the occaſions; and ſo notorious were the debaucheries acted, that the few prieſts, who had not ſacrificed every conſideration of morals or of religion, to the ſpirit of rebellion, endeavoured, though fruitleſsly, to ſtop ſuch diſſolute proceedings. We can hardly believe, that many thouſand children of both ſexes, carrying, each a taper in their hands, after traverſing the capital, extinguiſhed them at the ſame time, trampling them under foot, and exclaiming, "God extinguiſhes the race of "Valois!". Scarcely any example of national madneſs, to be found in the annals of mankind, can equal that of the French people, at the concluſion of the reign of Henry the Third. The duke of Nevers, who flouriſhed at that time, and whoſe Memoirs bear teſtimony to the enlargement of his underſtanding, conſiders the Pariſians, as under the influence of a contagious delirium, or, an infectious diſtemper, only to be compared to the hooping cough [38]. De Thou, a

Frenzy of the Pariſians, for proceſſions.

Libertiniſm and debaucchery.

Proceſſions of children.

[37] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 270—272.

[38] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 935 and 936.

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Sentiment of De Thou, on the madneſs of nations.

contemporary, and a ſpectator of it, ſeems to conceive, that nations, like individuals, are ſubject to paroxyſms of frenzy, which viſit them periodically; and the events of the preſent time, unparalleled in atrocity, preciſely at the diſtance of two hundred years, might induce us to adopt the opinion of that ſagacious and enlightened hiſtorian [59].

Declamations from the pulpit.

The year 1583, which ſaw the origin of the order of penitents, was, likewiſe the era, from whence may be dated another characteriſtic feature of this period of general diſorder and anarchy. By a ſingular fatality, a prince, who had always loaded the eccleſiaſtics, and particularly, the monaſtic orders, with marks of affection bordering on weakneſs; found in them his moſt dangerous, and implacable enemies. Poncet, a monk, poſſeſſed of a ſpecies of eloquence, adapted to the audience whom he was accuſtomed to addreſs; and reſtrained by no ſentiments of reſpect for the perſon of his ſovereign, led the way, by the groſs inſinuations which he uttered, to the bolder invectives that followed, after Henry's flight from the metropolis. He did not ſcruple to accuſe the members of the new confraternity, with hypocriſy and atheiſm. We may form an idea of the ſtyle of the pulpit declamation in that age, from Poncet's diſcoveries. "I have been "informed," ſaid he, "that after their proceſſion, the ſpit turned "for the ſupper of theſe jolly penitents; and that from devouring a "fat capon, they proceeded to complete their repaſt, by a delicate "chicken kept in readineſs for the night. Ah! miſerable hypocrites! "It is thus that you jeſt with God under a maſk, and carry at your "girdle a ſcourge. It is not there, that it ought to be placed; but, "upon your backs and ſhoulders: there is not one of you, who has "not amply deſerved it!" The only puniſhment inflicted on him, for a ſatire ſo inſolent, and in which alluſion was made to the king without any diſguiſe, conſiſted in his temporary removal from Paris,

Lenity of Henry the Third, pernicious.

[59] De Thou, vol. x. p. 529. Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 61 and 62. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 119. Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 270—272.

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by Henry's order, to the abbey of St. Peter, at Melun [60]. Encouraged by ſo injudicious a lenity, the evil ſpread with prodigious rapidity. After the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes, no meaſures were obſerved by the preachers, who only ſeemed to vie with each other in the violent and treaſonable appellations, beſtowed by them on their ſovereign. Many of them are too repugnant to our ideas of decorum, even to be tranſcribed. Regicide was publickly enjoined and recommended. Scriptural citations, of the moſt impious nature, were applied to the ducheſs of Nemours, mother to the duke and cardinal, recently put to death at Blois. She was compared to the Virgin Mary, as Henry was to Herod [61]. Collects, and forms of prayer, or, rather of imprecation, were compoſed by the Sorbonne, invoking the vengeance of Heaven againſt their late king. Several of theſe are preſerved, and forcibly demonſtrate the virulence of the times [62].

Impiety, and indecency of the preachers.

Imprecations.

Reprehenſible in the extreme, as were the exceſſes committed by the clergy of the League, they were, if poſſible, exceeded by the deteſtable doctrines, which the Catholic prieſts promulgated from the pulpit, in many of the provinces. There is an original letter ſtill in being, written by Henry, king of Navarre, to his miſtreſs, Coriſande d'Andouins, dated the 17th of March, 1588, from the province of Saintonge, in which he expreſsly ſays: "The Romiſh preachers, in all the cities of "this country, commend the act of poiſoning the prince of Condé; "declare, that there is only one more, to be deſired; canoniſe the mur-"der, and the murderer; nay, admoniſh every good Catholic, to take "example by ſo chriſtian an enterprize [63]." It is not poſſible more ſtrongly to depicture the ſavage and ſanguinary ſpirit, which pervaded every claſs of men in that age, when religious enmity had almoſt extinguiſhed the ſentiments of humanity. Tavannes accuſes the Hugo-

Deteſtable doctrines promulgated.

[60] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 159 and 160. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 69.

[61] L'Etoile, p. 113 and 115, and 123. Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 272.

[62] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 269 and 270. Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. iii. p. 82. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 118. De Thou, vol. x. p. 527.

[63] Lettres origin. d'Henry IV. Œuvres de Voltaire, vol. x. p. 234 and 235.

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nots of having advanced ſimilar tenets and principles, if not from the pulpit, yet, in their two famous publications, entitled the "Reveille "Matin," and the "Tocſin des François," written at an early period of the civil wars [64].

Aſylums.

Among the abuſes produced by ſuperſtition, and tending, in an eminent degree, to ſpread through the lower orders of people, the contagion of vice, was the exiſtence and ſanctity of aſylums. Theſe inſtitutions, originating in ignorance and barbariſm, were perverted to purpoſes the moſt ſubverſive of all juſtice, or good order. One of the moſt celebrated, in the period before us, was that of St. Romain, at Rouen. By the letters patent of Louis the Twelfth, confirming its privileges, perſons guilty of treaſon, falſe coiners, and ſome others, were excepted from the right of protection. But, during the time when the ſee of Rouen was occupied by the cardinal of Bourbon, the aſylum of St. Romain became a refuge for criminals of every deſcription. Its vicinity to the metropolis, and the rigid ſupport given by the archbiſhop, to the right of ſanctuary, induced numbers to fly to it, in order to elude the purſuit of the laws. From a ſenſe of gratitude to their protector, they readily entered into the great conſpiracy, formed by the League, againſt the royal authority and the ſtate, of which the cardinal became a voluntary inſtrument. The parliament of Rouen, deeply ſenſible of the impediments thrown in the way of juſtice, by the continuance of ſuch a privilege, made repeated, but, ineffectual applications to the king, for interpoſition. The careleſs apathy of that prince, rendered him inſenſible to their ſalutary remonſtrances. An aſſembly of princes and counſellors of ſtate having been convoked by Henry, in 1583, where the reformation of the courts of law formed a principal object of conſideration; La Gueſle, preſident of the parliament of Paris, harangued with eloquence and force, upon the pernicious nature and tendency of the

St. Romain's, at Rouen.

Abuſe ariſing from it.

[64] Tavannes, p. 217.

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aſylum of St. Romain. The cardinal of Bourbon, indignant at the attack upon the immunities of his ſee, inſtantly threw himſelf at the king's feet, and implored, that La Gueſle might be compelled to make ſatisfaction to himſelf, and to the church of Rouen, for ſo ſcandalous an outrage. The emotion of the prelate only excited ridicule; but, the abuſe, of which complaint was made, continued to exiſt in all its force [65].

Ineffectual attempt to procure its ſuppreſſion.

In no inſtance, does the credulity and folly of the vulgar ſeem to have been more abuſed, than in the article of relics. We find the ſame groſs deceptions, which had been practiſed, and expoſed among the Engliſh, at the time of the reformation under Henry the Eighth, ſtill ſubſiſting in France, at the commencement of the civil wars. It would be endleſs to cite examples of this fact. At the capture of Tours, by the prince of Condé, in 1562, the ſhrine of St. Martin, one of the richeſt and moſt celebrated in the kingdom, was plundered. Among other ſacred ornaments, was a gem, regarded as a portrait of the Virgin Mary, and held in high veneration. Beza, on inſpection, aſcertained it to be an antique agat of Venus, weeping over the body of Adonis. A ſilver arm of a ſaint, found in the ſame place, on being opened, was diſcovered to contain a knave of ſpades, and a love ſong. At Bourges, the Hugonots broke to pieces a relic, within which was a ſmall wheel, turning on a piece of wood; and round it was a billet, containing theſe lines:

"Quand cette Roue tournera,
"Cette que j'ayme, m'aymera [66]."

In order to form a perfect idea of the political ſtrength of France, during the period under our conſideration, it is indiſpenſable to take a ſurvey of the ſtate of the Hugonots. Notwithſtanding the perſecutions which they had ſuffered, the wars ſuſtained by them, and

State of the Hugonots, at this period.

[65] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 83—86.
[66] Theod. Beza. Hiſtoire Eccleſiaſt. liv. vii. p. 583 and 584. Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 463—465.

the

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the maſſacres repeatedly perpetrated by order of the court, or by the enmity of the Catholics; they ſtill continued to be equally numerous and formidable. In the northern and eaſtern provinces, they were comparatively few; but, in Dauphiné, and along the ſhore of the Mediterranean, they conſtituted a large proportion of the inhabitants. Their principal force was concentered between the Loire and the Garonne; compriſing a rich, maritime, and commercial tract of country, in which Rochelle, the capital, was ſituated. The genius of their government, civil, and eccleſiaſtical, partook more of a democratic, than of any other form; tempered notwithſtanding by a mixture of ariſtocracy, and greatly under the influence of their clergy, and municipal magiſtrates. Before the commencement of the firſt civil wars, in 1562, the cities of the Proteſtant communion, in imitation of Geneva, had formed the plan of excluding the nobility from any participation in the political power and authority. But, when, in conſequence of the ſuperior forces of the Crown and the Catholics, they found themſelves ready to be cruſhed, it became indiſpenſable to call to their aſſiſtance the princes of Bourbon. After the battle of Jarnac, in 1569, Coligni obtained over the whole Hugonot party, an empire the moſt unlimited, which he exerciſed till his death. His great endowments, age, and ſincere attachment to the cauſe, joined to the perilous ſituation of their affairs, overcame all competition. The maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, in which Coligni, and ſo great a number of the Proteſtant nobility periſhed, emancipated the party from this ſervitude; and after ſucceſsfully combating the Crown, they determined not to ſubject themſelves voluntarily to any ſpecies of government, except a Republic[67].

Numbers.

Genius of their government, republican.

Power of Coligni.

Duke of Alenſon.

It was in vain that Francis, duke of Alenſon, attempted, by affecting a regard for their intereſts, to acquire any permanent ſupremacy in their counſels. Even, while that prince headed the Hugonot armies againſt his brother Henry the Third, his conduct

[67] Tavannes, p. 394.

was

was watched with jealous and ſuſpicious attention. The city of Rochelle, in 1576, far from admitting him to exerciſe the ſlighteſt portion of authority, refuſed him the reſtitution of a few pieces of cannon, and rejected his requeſt of aiding him by a pecuniary loan [68]. During the whole period between 1576, and 1589, the king of Navarre and the prince of Condé, either openly, or in ſecret, exerted their endeavors to be reſpectively recognized protector of the Proteſtants. The former, as more nearly allied to the crown, ſeemed to have a ſuperior claim: but, many circumſtances inclined them to prefer the prince. The gravity of his diſpoſition, and his averſion to every kind of libertiniſm, was more analogous to the ſevere ſpirit of the Hugonot religion, than the character of his couſin: his father's death at Jarnac pleaded in his behalf; and he poſſeſſed all the qualities requiſite for ſo arduous a ſtation. The king of Navarre, notwithſtanding, obtained the preference; but, it was little more than a nominal ſupremacy [69]. A penſion was aſſigned to Condé, by no means, ample; as the ſtates of Flanders, nearly at the ſame period, had done by the arch-duke Matthias. It was not till after a long negotiation, and many delays, that the magiſtrates of Rochelle admitted him to make his entry into that city, in November, 1576. He was only accompanied by a few followers, and he quitted the place ſoon afterwards, to retire to St. John d'Angely, his uſual reſidence [70].

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Rivality of Navarre and Condé.

The king of Navarre could not attain to any greater conſideration, notwithſtanding the numerous ſacrifices which he made to his religious faith, and the zealous intereſt that he took in the welfare of the Hugonot body. After his eſcape from Paris in 1576, and his public reſumption of the Proteſtant doctrines and worſhip, he could yet ſcarcely obtain permiſſion to enter Rochelle, attended by fifty horſemen. The inhabitants, under arms, in great numbers, and reinforced by thoſe of the neighbouring iſlands, Re, and Oleron, received

Independance of Rochelle.

[68] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 431. p. 88. Davila, p. 456.
[69] Tavannes, ibid. Chron. Nov. vol. i. [70] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 438—441.

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ceived him with apparent demonſtrations of affection; while they took every precaution to ſecure themſelves againſt any enterprize[71]. A degree of competition and rivality conſtantly ſubſiſted between the two princes of Bourbon, during the reign of Henry the Third, which might have produced conſequences fatal to the intereſts of both, if they had not been terminated by the premature and lamentable death of the prince of Condé. A ſhort time only before that tragical event, after the victory at Coutras, in November, 1587, the duke de la Tremouille urged the prince to render himſelf independant ſovereign in the provinces of Anjou, Poitou, and Saintonge: a ſcheme which he ſeemed not averſe to have attempted without delay[72].

Struggle of Condé to ſupplant the king of Navarre.

Foreign competitors of that prince.

John Caſimir.

The king of Navarre had foreign, as well as domeſtic competitors, for the title of Protector of the Hugonots. In a ſynod, held at Montauban, it was propoſed to confer that dignity on John Caſimir, ſon to Frederic the Third, elector palatine, who had repeatedly ſent, or conducted troops to the aſſiſtance of the profeſſors of the reformed religion. An annual donation of one hundred and twenty-five thouſand crowns, was deſtined to accompany the office, in order to retain conſtantly the ſuperior officers under the ſtandard, beſides a fund for paying the ſoldiery. The miſconduct of John Caſimir's miniſters, deputed to negociate with the French Proteſtants, rather than any effectual oppoſition which it was in the king of Navarre's power to exert, ſeems to have rendered the plan abortive: but, it ſtrongly diſplays the diſtruſt entertained of that prince[73]. If once any foreign chief had become the efficient head and protector of the Hugonots, the civil wars might have been prolonged and perpetuated without end. Even ſome months after the deceaſe of the prince of Condé, in November, 1588, when the king of Navarre, as preſident, convoked, and opened the general aſſembly at Rochelle, he was menaced with a blow ſubverſive of all his meaſures for retaining the protectorſhip of the Proteſtants.

[71] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 429 and 430.
[72] Sully, vol. i. p. 60 and 61.
[73] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 88.

Many

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Many perſons of quality, and even ſome of the clergy, were deſirous to name protectors of their religion in every province of France, which amounted to eighteen. In order to elude the blow, he conſented to erect ſix courts or tribunals, in as many of the principal cities, to take cognizance of, and to paſs ſentence in all cauſes; peculiarly in thoſe which reſpected his own officers, who had rendered themſelves obnoxious and unpopular, by exacting contributions, on various pretences. A propoſition ſo unobjectionable, met with univerſal approbation, and averted the impending misfortune [74]. Such was the ſituation of the Hugonot Commonwealth; for ſo it may be juſtly denominated; at the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign. The cities ſcarcely acknowledged any civil authority, except that of the mayors, or magiſtrates; paid few contributions; and reſembled the free, imperial cities of Germany. It was not till after the termination of the civil wars, and the auſpicious period of peace which enſued under Henry the Fourth, that an alteration took place in theſe important particulars [75].

Attempt, to name protectors of the Hugonots.

Independance of that body.

In their eccleſiaſtical polity and tenets of faith, the reformed church of France followed the doctrines of Calvin. Lutheraniſm had made little progreſs among them; and the genius of Calviniſm, repugnant to all gradations in ſpiritual preferment, tended to maintain the principles of civil equality. Provincial ſynods, and general aſſemblies, compoſed of delegates from the various orders, were frequently convened, to regulate their internal concerns, and to determine on the moſt important tranſactions of peace and war. In theſe meetings, the king of Navarre always preſided, either in perſon, or by his repreſentative [76]. As early as the year 1555, under Henry the Second's reign, the Proteſtants began to eſtabliſh places of religious worſhip, and to form ſocieties for maintaining the purity of their faith. The firſt was made in Paris itſelf; and the example ſpread with amazing ra-

Eccleſiaſtical polity.

Synods.

[74] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 87.
[75] Tavannes, p. 394 and 395, and 227.
[76] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 87; and vol. x. p. 420 and 421.

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pidity, in defiance of edicts and prohibitions[77]. It would appear, that, at no period whatever of the reigns of Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, was the exercise of their religion in private houses and families, altogether suspended, in the metropolis; although the penalty was capital for the offence[78].

Numbers of the Hugonots.

The numbers of the Hugonots, must be matter of conjecture, rather than of calculation. They never, probably, exceeded two millions, at their highest point. If we were to fix on the period when they were in the meridian of their power, and political strength, we should incline to date it, between the colloquy of Poissy in 1561, and the massacre of Paris, eleven years afterwards. During that interval, marked by all the calamities of civil war and religious discord, persecution sustained, and inflamed their enthusiasm. The name and aid of successive princes of the blood, the fortitude of Jane, queen of Navarre, the genius of Coligny, and the assistance of foreign powers, enabled them to dispute for pre-eminence with the antient superstition, and almost to subvert the throne itself. If the enterprize of Meaux had not been frustrated, by the promptitude and intrepidity of the Switzers, who protected the flight of Charles the Ninth to Paris; it is hard to say what barrier could have been affixed to the demands or inroads of the Protestants. How generally diffused were the tenets of the reformers, and how universally they were embraced or imbibed, even in the court, we may see in the Memoirs of Margaret of Valois. The duke of Anjou himself, afterwards Henry the Third, and who signalized his early youth by the victories which he obtained over them, had, nevertheless, previously caught the contagion. "All the court," says Margaret, "was infected with heresy; and peculiarly, my bro-"ther of Anjou, since king of France, whose childhood had not "escaped the impression of Hugonotism. He incessantly teized me to "change my religion, throwing my prayer-books into the fire, and "giving me in their stead, psalms and Hugonot prayers, which he

[77] Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 644.

[78] Sully, vol. i. p. 57.

"compelled

"compelled me to uſe. To theſe acts of violence, he added menaces, "that my mother would order me to be whipped[79]." We may judge from the force and ſimplicity of the queen of Navarre's deſcription, how widely the reformed doctrines were ſpread, and how favorably they were received, among the higheſt orders of ſociety. The Proteſtants continued ſtill to be formidable, under Henry the Third, though their numbers were leſſened; but, after the acceſſion of the king of Navarre to the throne of France, they began rapidly to diminiſh. The deſertion of that monarch, and his reconciliation to the church of Rome; together with the toleration granted them by him, tended inſenſibly to draw off all thoſe, who were not animated with fervent zeal for the maintenance of the reformed religion.

Revenues. It was impoſſible to aſcertain the revenue of a body of men, whoſe contributions were, in a great meaſure, voluntary, and augmented or diminiſhed according to the exigencies of the time. Their military re- Forces. ſources were ſufficiently demonſtrated by the armies which they raiſed, and by the celerity exhibited in their levies. We cannot reflect without amazement, that, in 1568, the two provinces of Dauphiné and Languedoc only, conducted above twenty-five thouſand men to the aſſiſtance of the prince of Condé, collected with ſurprizing facility. They were equipped, armed, and provided, in the ampleſt manner. D'Acier, their commander, had, in his own company, near two hundred gentlemen[80]. Notwithſtanding the defeats of Jarnac and of Montcontour, in the following year; the laſt of which actions coſt the Hugonots not leſs than nine thouſand troops; Coligni re-appeared in 1570, at the head of a new army, in Burgundy. No efforts of equal magnitude were made after the death of that celebrated chief; becauſe the Proteſtants, diſunited, no longer acted with the ſame promptitude and energy. The king of Navarre did not ſucceed to Coligni's power and influence; nor did Henry the Third betray

[79] Memoires de Marguerite, Paris, 1658, p. 9, 10.

[80] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 588 and 589.

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the ſame ſentiments towards his Hugonot ſubjects, which had animated him, when conducting the forces of Charles the Ninth. The edict of Poitiers, granting them toleration, was his own immediate act[81].

Renewal of hoſtilities in 1580, unjuſtifiable.

It muſt be admitted, that the recommencement of war by the Proteſtants, in 1580, was a wanton and unjuſtifiable infraction of treaty, produced by the intrigues of the court of Nerac, where women and gallantry directed every meaſure. So ſenſible were the principal cities of the reformed religion, to this fact, that Rochelle, and ſeveral others, refuſed to join in the inſurrection[82]. Before 1588, the violent enthuſiaſm of the Hugonots had greatly ſubſided: and they were no longer animated by the ſame ſpirit, which, under Charles the Ninth, had rendered them invincible, and ſuperior to defeats, or maſſacres. The lapſe of time had inſenſibly ſoftened the aſperity of the two great factions, and calmed their rancour. The duke of Nevers, writing to Henry the Third, in Auguſt, 1588, ſays: "The Hugonots have ſpent all their fire, and are only on the defenſive. Neither cities, nor provinces, follow them any longer. The ardor of novelty is extinct, and there is, in fact, nothing to be feared from them." But, the League is in its firſt vigor, and all the world is "attracted to that party[83]." Towards the cloſe of his reign, Henry can only be conſidered as acting under the impulſe of the Guiſes, who compelled him, reluctantly, to take up arms againſt the princes of Bourbon, as the heads of the Proteſtants.

Maritime force.

The maritime force of the Hugonots was principally maintained and ſtationed at Rochelle, or in the ports and iſlands of its vicinity. It bore no ſmall proportion to the royal navy of France, and ventured, on various occaſions, to contend with it, for victory. In 1573, the count of Montgomery commanded fifty-three veſſels, when he appeared off the harbour of Rochelle, then cloſely beſieged by the duke of Anjou. Several of theſe were, unqueſtionably, Engliſh; twelve

[81] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 531.
[82] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 225.
[83] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 855.

were

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were ſhips laden with ſtores; and, except two, the whole fleet conſiſted of veſſels, not exceeding ſixty tons burthen. We may judge of their ſize, by the number of men on board: there were eighteen hundred; of whom ſcarcely a thouſand were ſailors. They were very ill equipped, and ſtill worſe provided with cannon. Montgomery was unable to effect the object of the expedition, or to attack the royal gallies, anchored in the port [84]. But, four years afterwards, in 1577, the Proteſtants poſſeſſed a more conſiderable naval ſtrength. The prince of Condé put himſelf on board their fleet, compoſed of ſeventeen upper-decked ſhips, and as many of inferior ſize. One of them was a Spaniſh veſſel, of four hundred tons [85]. Henry's admiral, Lanſac, who had under his command no leſs than ſixty ſail, of different dimenſions and deſcriptions, had been purſued by Clermont d'Amboiſe, only a ſhort time before, at the head of the Hugonot ſquadron, and compelled to take refuge in the Garonne [86]. The Proteſtants do not ſeem to have been maſters of any gallies.

Commerce. Rochelle.

Their commerce, as well as their marine, was almoſt excluſively confined to Rochelle. That city, advantageouſly ſituated, open to the Atlantic, and inhabited by a hardy, induſtrious race of men, accuſtomed to brave the dangers of the ocean, enjoyed, even in the midſt of civil war, an extenſive and lucrative trade. In 1568, they reckoned ten thouſand foreign merchants, who viſited and carried on a traffic to Rochelle [87]. Their complete independance on the crown, which took place in the following year: their civil and religious freedom: their mild internal government; and the ſpirit of naval or commercial enterprize, which characteriſed the inhabitants; all theſe combined cauſes conduced to render the city proſperous and opulent, notwithſtanding the perpetual hoſtilities in which they were involved. The repulſe, ſuſtained by the duke of Anjou, under their walls, in 1573, at the head of a numerous army, inflamed, and ex-

Its ſtrength, and reſources.

[84] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. ii. p. 48.
[85] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 513, and p. 516.
[86] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 512.
[87] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 549.

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alted their courage. By means of Elizabeth, queen of England, they received continual ſupplies of military and naval ſtores, for which they made returns in corn and ſalt [88]. Nor did they confine themſelves merely to the fair advantages, derived from a commercial intercourſe with other ſtates. They fitted out ſhips, which cruized in every direction, and captured numbers of trading veſſels. In 1569, a large Venetian carrack, valued at fifty thouſand crowns, was attacked near the coaſt of Brittany, by the vice-admiral of the Hugonot fleet, and carried into Rochelle. She was confiſcated to the uſe of the cauſe, on very inſufficient and ſlight pretences [89]. Some years afterwards, a Portugueze ſhip fell into their hands, after an obſtinate engagement, near the iſlands of the Azores; ſhe was reported to have had on board, a thouſand pounds weight of gold, in bars [90]. It was difficult to aſſign any cauſe for theſe acts of piracy and violence, except neceſſity, or convenience.

Naval enterprizes.

Captures.

Piracies and plunder.

We may judge how very productive were the naval expeditions, equipped for plunder, by the ſum derived from them to the Proteſtant chiefs, or princes, in the courſe of only two years, between the commencement of the third civil war, in 1568, and its termination, in 1570. The ſhare, appropriated to the admiralty, was one-tenth of all prizes; and it amounted, during that ſhort ſpace of time, to above three hundred thouſand livres, or, more than twelve thouſand pounds [91]. After the renewal of war in 1574, the admiralty portion was doubled, and one-fifth part of all captures was aſſigned to it, for the ſupport of the common cauſe; yet, ſo conſiderable a diminution of profit did not deter, or diminiſh the number of adventurers. Rapacity, and the hope of rapidly acquiring wealth, rather than any neceſſity, was the ſpur to theſe enterprizes. Crimes the moſt revolting and enormous, were frequently committed by the Hugonot cruizers, who not only attacked, indifferently, almoſt all European nations, on

Crimes perpetrated by the adventurers.

[88] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 515. Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. p. 344.

[89] Memoires de Caſt. vol. i. p. 261.

[90] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 267.

[91] La Noue, p. 695.

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the high ſeas; but, threw to the waves even the crews of their allies, in order thereby to conceal their depredations. This fact is not to be controverted, as we derive it from their own writers [92].

Intolerance, and cruelty of the age.

In an age like the preſent, diſtinguiſhed rather by indifference, than by zeal, in matters of religion, we cannot eaſily conceive the degree of enmity and intolerance, which characterized the period under our conſideration. It roſe to ſuch a height, that, when ſharpened by civil war, it overbore and extinguiſhed every ſentiment of private affection, or general humanity. Repreſſed in ſome meaſure, by the vigorous adminiſtration of Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second; it burſt all limits under the three ſucceeding princes, and converted the kingdom into a vaſt burying-ground. Montluc does not ſcruple to acquaint us, that, after having agreed to admit the garriſon of a beſieged town in Gaſcony, to capitulate, he privately ſent an emiſſary to enjoin his troops to break into the place while the terms were adjuſting, and to put every inhabitant to the ſword. The order was executed in its utmoſt rigor [93]. "I can aſſert with truth," ſays he, "that there is not a commander of the king in all France, "who has diſpatched more Hugonots by the knife, or by the halter, "than myſelf [94]." When wounded at the ſtorm of Rabaſteins, in Bigorre, and conceiving himſelf near his end, his only concern appears to have been, not to allow a ſingle perſon to eſcape the general carnage; and he iſſued peremptory directions for the purpoſe. Even the women were not ſpared; and the Catholic ſoldiery precipitated fifty or ſixty of the inhabitants from a tower, as matter of amuſement [95]. One of the moſt atrocious conſpiracies ever conceived by bigotry, and undertaken by ambition under the cloak of religion, was that of Philip the Second, king of Spain, in concert with the Guiſes, againſt Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre. It was planned in 1565, and only failed in its execution, by the imprudence of one of the in-

Montluc.

Carnage of Rabaſteins.

Conſpiracy, formed againſt Jane, queen of Navarre.

[92] La Noue, p. 696.
[93] Montluc, Comm. vol. iv. p. 92—94.
[94] Montluc, vol. iv. p. 121.
[95] Ibid. p. 221 and 222.

ferior

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ferior agents. The intention was no other, than to ſeize a ſovereign princeſs, of irreproachable manners, and allied to the royal blood of France, in the midſt of her court, and in a time of profound peace, in order to deliver her over to the inquiſition. The pretext for an enterprize ſo flagitious, was the queen's attachment to hereſy. It was of ſufficient magnitude to juſtify any crime, however perfidious or cruel, in the opinion of zealous Catholics. Every detail of this abominable and extraordinary tranſaction, is to be found in Villeroy [96].

Its atrocious nature.

Savage treatment of the Hugonots.

Even minds, naturally ſuſceptible of the moſt beneficent ſentiments towards mankind, became obdurate towards their own countrymen, when of a different perſuaſion in religion. Louis, duke of Montpenſier, a prince otherwiſe of a mild and generous character, who commanded the royal armies under Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third; was accuſtomed to put to death, by a ſummary proceſs, every priſoner accuſed of adherence to the Proteſtant doctrines, or to deliver them over to the brutal violence of his ſoldiers. When men were brought before him; "Friend," ſaid he, "you are "a Hugonot; I recommend you to Monſieur Babelot." This inſtrument of his cruelty was no other than a monk of the Franciſcan order, who acted the part of judge and executioner. They were no ſooner interrogated, than condemned and maſſacred. The women were commonly reſerved for the ſavage embraces of his guidon, or ſtandard-bearer. Far from exciting horror, or indignation, theſe barbarities ſerved only for ſubject of converſation, and of indecent raillery, among the ladies of the court, and at the tables of the great [97].

Montpenſier.

Other inſtances.

John de Champagne, a nobleman of the ſame period, when reſiding at his caſtle of Peſcheſeul, on the river Sartre, uſed to throw all the Proteſtants who fell into his poſſeſſion, into the ſtream. He accompanied it with an inſulting piece of buffoonery, as performing

[96] Villeroy, Memoires, vol. ii. p. 39—58.

[97] Brantome, vol iii. Cap. Frau. p. 280—282. D'Aub. vol. i. Hiſt. Univ. p. 135.

an act of festivity, rather than a deliberate murder; nor did the laws take any cognizance of such atrocious crimes[98]. The chevalier of Aumale, one of the princes of Lorrain, distinguished for the ferocity and brutality of his manners, violated even the sanctity of places of public worship; and committed every species of wanton debauch, or deliberate cruelty, in the Catholic churches. Nuns, and women of condition, were despoiled of their honor, before the high altar, to the foot of which they were dragged by the hair, in presence of their husbands, fathers, and nearest relatives[99]. But, it is in the writings of d'Aubigné, that we find the most accurate information upon a point, which so forcibly delineates the temper and spirit of the age. He is entitled to the greater credit, because, being a zealous Hugonot, he is, nevertheless, far from concealing the outrages committed by his own associates, though he attempts to justify, or palliate them, on the principle of retribution. St. Pont, a Catholic, commanding at Macon in Burgundy, in 1562, usually ordered a certain number of Protestants to be thrown from the bridge into the Soane, after the banquets with which he regaled the ladies, by way of pastime[100]. We cannot peruse without disgust, as well as horror, the enormities committed at Tours, and at Orange, by the royal troops[101]. Even Coligni himself, however naturally beneficent and mild, was propelled, by the sanguinary genius of the times, to permit, or to authorize acts of wanton severity. Retaliation, or vengeance, seemed to palliate these executions, which became unhappily necessary, in order to impose some restraint on minds, inflamed by religious animosity, to a pitch of mutual phrenzy.

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St. Pont.

In October, 1562, twelve monks of the order of St. Francis, at Chateau Vilain, having been accused of massacring the sick, or wounded Protestants of the army; Coligni caused them to be immediately hanged.

[98] Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 482.
[99] Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 333, 334.
[100] D'Aub. Hist. Univ. vol. i. p. 145.
[101] Ibid. p. 130 and 146.

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Two of their own brotherhood voluntarily offered to become the executioners of the others. Ropes were delivered to both; and as an experiment of their reſpective capacity to perform the office of a hangman, one was ordered to diſpatch the other. It afforded a cruel paſtime to the ſpectators, to witneſs the efforts of theſe unfortunate men, to obtain the preference. "Never," ſays d'Aubigné, "did "the Retiarii, Laquearii, or Mirmillones of antiquity, diſplay be- "fore the Romans in the amphitheatre, more addreſs in vanquiſh- "ing each other, than did theſe Cordeliers. One of them having, "at length, dextrouſly contrived to ſtrangle his companion, put to "death all the ſurvivors." He was afterwards retained by the Hugonots, as executioner to the army, and grew very expert in his profeſſion [102]. The pre-eminence in cruelty of every ſpecies, was, notwithſtanding, ceded, by the univerſal teſtimony of his contemporaries, to des Adrets, who long rendered his name proverbial for barbarity, in the provinces on the Rhone, where he was at the head of the Hugonot forces [103]. His ordinary mode of diſpatching the victims of his fury or enmity, was by precipitating them from a tower, and daſhing them in pieces: a ſpectacle, in which he took a ſavage delight. He was, however, not inacceſſible to pity, or to wit. Having ordered, after his dinner, thirty priſoners, taken at Montbriſon, and whom he had purpoſely reſerved, to precipitate themſelves from the edge of the mountain; one of them, terrified, and unable to take the leap, ſtopt ſhort on the extreme verge. "How," exclaimed des Adrets, "you take twice to do it?" "Sir," replied the ſoldier, "I will give you ten times, in which to perform it." Charmed with an anſwer which evinced ſo much pleaſantry and ſelf-poſſeſſion, in a moment of ſuch peril, he immediately pardoned the man, and exempted him from the fate of his companions [104].

Des Adrets.

Anecdote of him.

[102] Confeſſion de Sancy, p. 492, 493, and p. 541.
[103] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 246—248.
[104] D'Aubigné, Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 147.

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From the determination of outdoing his enemies in cruelty, and of thus compelling them to carry on war with more humanity, des Adrets cauſed the hand and foot of three hundred Catholic gentlemen to be cut off, and ſent them in that condition, on carts, to the royal camp. The expedient, terrible as it was, did not fail to produce the intended effect [105]. Such was the ferocity and ſpirit of perſecution, that it pervaded every rank and order of ſociety. The princeſs of Condé, and her eldeſt ſon, were in the moſt imminent danger of being ſtoned to death by the peaſants of a little village in the neighbourhood of Orleans, for the ſole crime of hereſy [106]. Obedience to the laws and the ſovereign, were ſuperſeded by the deteſtation and antipathy of the two religions. When Rapin, a Hugonot gentleman, arrived at Toulouſe, in 1568, charged with diſpatches from the king and from the prince of Condé, announcing the concluſion of a treaty of peace between the Crown and the Proteſtants; the magiſtrates and people inſtantly cauſed him to be executed without form of juſtice [107]. In the ſhort interval which elapſed between that treaty and the renewal of war, not exceeding ſix months; more than ten thouſand Hugonots were maſſacred in various parts of France [108]. The biſhop of Nevers, deputed by the prince of Condé, in 1562, to the emperor, Ferdinand the Firſt; did not heſitate to aſſert, in his harangue, pronounced before the diet aſſembled at Frankfort, that in the ſpace of only four months preceding the aſſumption of arms, thirty thouſand perſons profeſſing the reformed religion were put to death by the populace, throughout the kingdom [109].

Severities of that commander.

Oblivion of the laws.

Maſſacres.

Even the moſt profound ſubmiſſion to the laws and magiſtrates, could not ſecure protection, nor preſerve from violence. In 1572, eight hundred Proteſtants, who, in obedience to the injunction of the governor of Lyons, had voluntarily allowed themſelves to be diſarmed and confined, on receiving his aſſurance of ſafety; were

[105] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 155.
[106] Ibid. p. 134.
[107] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 191. La Noue, p. 699.
[108] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 262.
[109] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 35.

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maſſacred by the Catholics, within an hour afterwards. At Rouen, a ſtill more enormous violation of faith was committed. More than eighteen hundred Hugonots, who had quitted the city, having returned to their houſes, upon promiſe of ſecurity in the king's name, were indiſcriminately ſacrificed to the implacable animoſity of their enemies. Theſe facts were ſo notorious and ſo inconteſtable, that the deputies of Henry, prince of Condé, who were ſent, in 1575, to negotiate a peace with Henry the Third, ſoon after his acceſſion, did not heſitate to ſtate them, in the moſt forcible language. Neither the king, nor Catherine of Medecis, attempted to controvert, or deny the aſſertions. They only tried to palliate their enormity, by accuſing the Hugonots of ſimilar acts of perfidy, or vengeance [110]. In the review of this ſanguinary and ferocious period, we are perpetually reminded of the ſcenes of devaſtation and ſlaughter, which have been again acted on the ſame theatre, by a ſavage populace, ſince the revolution of 1789. It was criminal, only to lean towards toleration.

Danger of l'Hopital.

The great chancellor l'Hopital, known to lament the ſanguinary maxims of Charles the Ninth, and to deplore the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, was inſtantly marked for deſtruction. The guards of Catherine of Medecis could ſcarcely protect him from being torn in pieces by an enraged and furious people, who thirſted for his life, though paſſed in the diſcharge of every public duty, and every domeſtic virtue [111]. Some years before, during the progreſs made by the court through the ſouthern provinces of France, it had become neceſſary to give him a guard, in order to ſecure him from outrage, on account of his avowed diſinclination to violent meaſures in matters of religion [112].

Spirit and mode of thinking, in that century.

When we conſider how generally diffuſed was this intolerant ſpirit, we may, perhaps, incline to attribute to its influence, more than to any other cauſe, the calamities which mark the period. Neither the machinations of Catherine of Medecis, the ferocity

[110] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 339—341.
[111] Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. Eclairciſſements, p. 72 and 73.
[112] Brantome, vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 100—101.

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of Charles the Ninth, nor the ambition and revenge of the Guiſes, could have produced the maſſacre of Paris, if all the materials had not been previouſly diſpoſed. It is more to the age, than to any individuals, however elevated or profligate, that we ought to look, for the explication of that memorable and unparalleled event [113]. To ſhed the blood of Heretics, was eſteemed meritorious. Marſhal Tavannes, who fairly avows in his Memoirs, that he adviſed the maſſacre, and who juſtifies it on principles of neceſſity and policy, died in the following year, at an advanced period of life. He met the approaches of diſſolution, with compoſure; exhibited marks of unfeigned piety; ordered his ſons to reſtore to the crown, without touching the revenues, an abbey which he poſſeſſed; and made confeſſion of all his ſins without reſerve. But, he did not include in the liſt, his advice to put to the ſword two thouſand Proteſtants who had repaired to Paris, on the faith of the royal protection, becauſe he felt neither remorſe, nor condemnation for the act [114]. Such was the genius of the century, and the perverſion of the human mind on religious concerns. A degree of enthuſiaſm, which ſuſpended and extinguiſhed all the ordinary motives to human action, and which ſwallowed up even ambition, natural affection, and ſelf-intereſt, pervaded the minds of men, on religious matters. A thouſand proofs of it occur. The duke of Nevers ſays in his Memoirs, that he conſidered a war againſt Heretics and Hugonots, as a cruſade, to which every man was bound to ſubſcribe his private fortune. He gave the beſt proof of his ſincerity, by lending immenſe ſums to Henry the Third, in order to pay his forces, at various times, when employed to reduce, or, to exterminate the Proteſtants. All his writings, and the tenor of his whole life, evince, that the duke of Nevers was a man of ſcrupulous honor, unſhaken loyalty in an age of univerſal faction, and of real piety. He was carried away by the perſecuting ſpirit of the time in which he lived [115].

Marſhal Tavannes.

[113] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Eclairciſſements, p. 67—69.

[114] Tavannes, p. 418—420, and 470.

[115] Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 170, 171.

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The cardinal of Bourbon, a prelate mild and humane in his own nature, but, ſuperſtitious and intolerant; declared in a council, held at Blois, in February, 1577, where Henry the Third was preſent, that not even a temporary toleration ought, on any pretence, to be granted to the Hugonots. "I have," ſaid he, "more intereſt in the preſervation of that body of men, than any "other individual, ſince my two nephews are engaged in their "quarrel; but, I would myſelf become their executioner, if they "are Heretics"[116]." Montluc, notwithſtanding the cruelties which he ordered or perpetrated againſt the Proteſtants, was not deſtitute of principles of devotion towards the Supreme Being, as is evident from all his writings. He regarded himſelf as no other than an executioner of the divine vengeance, and engaged in a holy vocation, when putting to the ſword perſons convicted of hereſy. "I have "never," ſays he, "been in any action, that I have not invoked the "aid of the Deity; and I have not paſſed a day in my whole life, "without having prayed to, and demanded his forgiveneſs"[117]." The prayer which he ſubjoins, as that, which, from his earlieſt entrance on a military life, he had been accuſtomed to offer to God, is ſuch as Marcus Aurelius, or Socrates, might have dictated and approved. The concluſion is equally ſublime and reſigned: "I aſk not for life: for I deſire "only that which pleaſes thee. Thy will be done: I ſubmit all to "thy divine goodneſs"[118]." It is in theſe contradictions and inconſiſtencies, that we ſee fully depictured the character of the age, in which ſuperſtition and intolerance were perpetually blended, and whoſe union was ſo productive of ſcenes of deſtruction.

Montluc.

His enthuſiaſm and conviction.

Examples of liberality and tolerance.

It is, notwithſtanding, matter of pleaſing reflexion to all who deſire to contemplate human nature in an amiable point of view, to know, that even in a time ſo ſanguinary, there were not wanting

[116] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 172.
[117] Montluc, vol. iv. p. 332.
[118] Montluc, vol. iv. p. 332.

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ſome mild and beneficent ſpirits, occupied in tempering the rage of religious diſcord. Every page of the works of l'Hopital, breathes conciliation and forgiveneſs. He was not ſatisfied with lamenting and condemning the violent meaſures of the cabinet of Charles the Ninth: he oppoſed them with ſteady, though, ineffectual firmneſs. His epiſtle to the cardinal of Lorrain, in 1562; and that, addreſſed to du Ferrièr, the French embaſſador at Venice, in 1568; are two of the moſt enlightened and maſterly productions of any period. They inculcate univerſal charity and toleration [119]. It would have been happy for mankind, if maxims ſo benign had not been obliterated and rejected, in the frenzy of perſecution.

L'Hopital.

Caſtelnau, whoſe valuable Memoirs terminate with the peace, concluded between the Crown and the Proteſtants, in 1570, finiſhes by thus apoſtrophizing his ſon: "Thou mayſt judge by what is here "related, that the ſpiritual ſword, which is the good example of the "clergy, charity, exhortation, and other good works, are more ne"ceſſary to extinguiſh hereſies, and to bring back into the right path "thoſe who have wandered out of it, than that which ſheds the "blood of our neighbours: more particularly, when the diſeaſe has "attained to ſuch a height, that in proportion as we attempt "to cure it by violent remedies, we only irritate the diſorder [120]."

Caſtelnau.

The ſpeech of Paul de Foix, archbiſhop of Toulouſe, made in the cabinet and council of Henry the Third, on his return from Poland, in 1574, ſtrenuouſly adviſing meaſures of lenity and toleration towards the Proteſtants; is full of the ſame enlarged and comprehenſive ſentiments. They were enforced by de Thou, firſt preſident of the Parliament of Paris, and by Harlay, his ſucceſſor. But, Henry, for his own misfortune, and that of his ſubjects, was incapable of perceiving their beneficial tendency [121].

Paul de Foix.

[119] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Epitres, p. 176—181, and p. 191—202.

[120] Caſtel. Memoires, vol. i. p. 266.

[121] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 137—149.

Even

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Damville.

Even marſhal Damville, ſon to the conſtable Montmorenci, and who ſubſequently attained to the ſame dignity, though an unlettered ſoldier, more inured to the hardſhips of a military life, than competent to judge of ſcholaſtic and theological diſputes; yet, felt the neceſſity of toleration. Experience ſupplied in him, the want either of expanſion of mind, or benevolence of diſpoſition. When the deputies of the States waited on him at Montpelier, in 1577, to acquaint him with their determination of renewing the war againſt the Proteſtants; he replied, that "the paſt calamities ſufficiently demonſtrated, that to God alone it belonged, to diſpenſe faith, "which cannot be the work of any earthly power: that he could "not enough expreſs his aſtoniſhment, at the reſumption of projects "ſo fatal; and that all mankind muſt be convinced of the neceſſity "of permitting the exerciſe of the two religions, as the only means "of preſerving, or perpetuating internal peace [122]."

King of Navarre.

Henry, king of Navarre, was a ſhining example of toleration, previous to, as well as after his aſcending the throne of France. In 1576, after his flight from Paris, and the renunciation which he made of the Catholic religion; far from attempting to force the conſciences of thoſe who adhered to it, he exerted all his endeavours, and not without ſucceſs, to obtain for them, the freedom of worſhip, in the city of Rochelle itſelf, the aſylum of the Hugonot faith and doctrines. At his requeſt, a chapel was permitted to be appropriated to the celebration of maſs; and his conduct in a point of ſuch importance and delicacy, acquired him, in no ſmall degree, the general eſteem and affection [123]. In all his ſubſequent actions, we trace the ſame enlargement of mind. The ſeverity on religious concerns, which, if we may believe the teſtimony of Margaret of Valois, his wife, he exerciſed towards her at Pau, the capital of Bearn, during her reſidence in that city; ſeems to have ariſen more from private reſentment, than from a ſpirit of perſecution [124]. When he over-ran Poitou, in 1589, and made him-

[122] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 478 and 479.

[123] Davila, p. 457.

[124] Memoires de Marg. p. 172—174.

ſelf

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ſelf maſter of a number of places in the province, he contented himſelf with reſtoring to the Proteſtants their civil and religious liberty, as granted them by the royal edicts; without attempting to moleſt, or, in any ſhape, to perſecute the Catholics [125]. Even though we ſhould attribute to policy, a ſyſtem ſo replete with benefit to the State, we diminiſh little of its merit. The proſperity and repoſe, which diſtinguiſhed the laſt twelve years of the reign of Henry the Fourth, and which rendered the period one of the happieſt in the annals of the French monarchy, were eminently due to the benign influence of the maxims of toleration, embraced by that illuſtrious prince.

Condition, and reſources of the king of Navarre.

It is requiſite for the completion of the picture before us, to trace, with ſome degree of accuracy, the condition and reſources of the king of Navarre, previous to his elevation to the throne of France. He may be conſidered as the moſt intereſting character of the period; and when we reflect, that, after having reſcued the country from an abyſs of calamities, he founded a new race of monarchs; no portion of his life can be matter of indifference, in the general delineation of the age and time.

His captivity.

During more than three years immediately following the maſſacre of Paris, he remained a captive in the court of the two kings, his brothers-in-law; deprived of power, watched with jealous circumſpection, compelled to profeſs a religion in which he did not believe, and not exempt from perpetual and imminent danger of his life.

Danger.

It is inconteſtable, that Charles the Ninth conſulted Philip the Second, in 1574, upon the meaſure of putting to death his own brother, the duke of Alenſon, and the king of Navarre [126]. He could not better addreſs himſelf than to a prince, juſtly ſuſpected of having accelerated the end of his only ſon, Don Carlos, a few years preceding. If Margaret of Valois, queen of Navarre, had produced a ſon, the reſolution to diſpatch her huſband, was already

[125] De Thou, vol. x. p. 585. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 164.

[126] Depoſition de Coconas, in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 375, and p. 366.

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taken [127]. Although he eſcaped from ſo many dangers, he was reduced to the loweſt point of depreſſion and inſignificance. Catherine of Medecis compelled him, from his priſon in the Louvre, to iſſue an edict, prohibiting, in all the territories of his obedience, the exerciſe of any other worſhip, except the Catholic [128]. His ſubjects, encouraged by the court of France, and no longer controlled by the preſence of a maſter, threw off all ſubjection or obedience [129]. Inſulted, or duped by the duke of Guiſe, who abuſed his confidence, and betrayed him to Henry the Third; he was conſidered as incapable of producing any diſturbance, and he ſunk into oblivion [130]. Immerſed in purſuits of gallantry, natural to his age, and which Catherine of Medecis artfully encouraged, in order to reconcile him to his captivity, he excited no apprehenſion [131]. His emancipation from confinement, was the firſt moment of his political exiſtence. During above thirteen years, which elapſed between his eſcape, and the interview of Pleſſiz les Tours, in 1589, he underwent the ſevereſt trials of his fortitude and virtue. Exiled to the diſtant province of Gaſcony: proſcribed by the king, his brother-in-law: perſecuted by the powerful faction of the League: declared by the States General, unworthy to ſucceed to the crown: excommunicated by the Romiſh pontiffs: attacked by the armies of Henry the Third; and diſhonoured, as well as betrayed by his own wife, who was not only falſe to his bed, but, engaged in enterprizes againſt his dignity and repoſe: he vanquiſhed theſe numerous aſſailants, and ſuſtained the throne, which he was deſtined to aſcend, when on the point of being ſubverted by a powerful and triumphant faction.

State of depreſſion.

Exile, and hardſhips.

His dominions.

The king of Navarre poſſeſſed little more of royalty, except the name and external honors. A ſmall portion of the Lower Navarre,

[127] Depoſition du Roi de Nav. in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 361.

[128] Hiſt. de Marg. de Val. p. 117.

[129] Depoſition du Roi de Nav. in Le Lab. vol. ii. p. 363.

[130] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 26. D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 186 and 187.

[131] Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. ii. p. 162.

together with the principality of Bearn, at the foot of the Pyrenees, constituted the whole of his contracted dominions. Ferdinand the Catholic had uſurped, and retained the far greater part of the antient kingdom of Navarre. The duchy of Albret in Gaſcony, and that of Vendome, formed no inconſiderable addition to his patrimonial inheritance. In right of his queen, Margaret of Valois, he, likewiſe, exerciſed the ſupreme authority in the two provinces of the Agenois and Quercy, ceded to that princeſs on her marriage, with every royal prerogative [132]. The title of governor of Guienne, which he retained, was deſtitute of political power or influence; nor would Bourdeaux, the capital, ever admit him within its walls [133]. Limited as were the territories of the king of Navarre, his ſovereignty was inconteſtable and acknowledged. Jane, his mother, did not heſitate, in 1569, to cauſe St. Colombe, Favas, Pordiac, and ſeveral other gentlemen, taken in arms againſt her, to be executed as traitors; they being natural-born ſubjects, and, of courſe, guilty of high treaſon [134]. The aggregate amount of the king of Navarre's revenues, was very inadequate to the ſupport of his dignity. It appears, that in 1573, after the acceſſion made to them, by the marriage portion of Margaret, they did not exceed, when the neceſſary charges were deducted, the clear ſum of one hundred and forty thouſand livres, or, about ſix thouſand pounds ſterling; while the annual expence of his houſehold and eſtabliſhment roſe to double the ſum [135]. In the preceding year, when he arrived at Paris, previous to his nuptials, he was accompanied by eight hundred noblemen and gentlemen, all in mourning for Jane, queen of Navarre [136]. His pecuniary difficulties were ſuch, as to render it impoſſible for him either to maintain the decent ſplendor of his court, or to reward the ſervices of his followers and ſervants. He ſupplied the deficiency, in a great degree, by the affa-

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Patrimony.

Sovereignty.

Revenues.

Pecuniary diſtreſs.

[132] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 375.
[133] Ibid. vol. vii. p. 436 and 437.
[134] Memoires de Caſt. vol. i. p. 250.
[135] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 777.
[136] Memoires de Margue, p. 29.

bility,

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bility, frankneſs, and amenity of his manners. When the duke of Epernon was ſent by Henry the Third, in 1584, to exhort him to a change of religion; the favorite far exceeded the king of Navarre, in the pomp of his retinue, and the grandeur of his attendants [137]. "The whole court of Nerac could not have furniſhed forty thou-"ſand livres," ſays Sully, "in 1586, at my arrival [138]." In his way thither, he ſupped with the prince of Condé, who was ſerved in wooden platters [139]. It appears, that the largeſt pecuniary appointments, given to any perſon in the court of Navarre, were thoſe enjoyed by Sully, in his double capacity of counſellor of ſtate, and chamberlain. They amounted together, only to the annual ſum of two thouſand livres, or about ninety pounds ſterling [140].

Military force.

A ſovereign ſo limited in his revenues, could maintain a very ſlender military force. He may be ſaid not to have had any regular troops under the ſtandard; and only to have compoſed a haſty aſſemblage of ill-diſciplined vaſſals, or retainers, when preſſed by the exigency of his affairs. His weakneſs was ſuch, that in 1577, during the war with Henry the Third, he found himſelf incapable of forming any army; and he was repulſed before the inconſiderable town of Marmande, in Guienne, with loſs and diſgrace, though he was preſent in perſon, at the head of all the cavalry and infantry in his power to aſſemble. Such was his deficiency in every requiſite for a campaign, or a ſiege, that his whole artillery conſiſted in one large, and two ſmall pieces of cannon [141]. In the enſuing rupture of 1580, he betrayed ſtill more evident marks of his inability to maintain a conteſt of duration, againſt the crown of France. Deſtitute of money and of troops, he was reduced to fly before Biron, who commanded the royal forces. The king of Navarre, ſhut up in Nerac, with only about four hundred horſemen, of whom the far greater number were

Slender reſources.

[137] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 88.

[138] About ſeventeen hundred pounds. Sully, vol. i. p. 45.

[139] Ibid. vol. i. p. 44.

[140] Memoires de Sully, vol. i. p. 414.

[141] Sully, vol. i. p. 16, and p. 18. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 191.

in

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in the ſervice of the count of La Rochefoucault; beheld the enemy advance to the gates, and take poſt with four thouſand foot, and ſix hundred cavalry, in the vineyards adjoining the city. He might have been compelled to ſurrender at diſcretion, and carried priſoner to Paris. But, Biron did not think proper to purſue his advantages; nor is it probable, that, at any period of his reign, Henry the Third could have deſired, or approved, the entire deſtruction of the firſt prince of the blood [142]. The largeſt body of forces which the king of Navarre ſeems ever to have commanded, before his acceſſion to the crown of France, was at Coutras, where they amounted to four thouſand foot, and two thouſand five hundred horſe: but, he was only the general; and far from being able to retain them after his victory, they immediately diſbanded, or followed their reſpective leaders [143]. At the accommodation between him and his brother-in-law, concluded at Tours, in 1589, it was ſtipulated, that he ſhould maintain, at his own expence, two thouſand infantry, and twelve hundred cavalry, to act againſt the League [144]. Epernon brought a much more conſiderable force, levied and armed by himſelf, to the aſſiſtance of his maſter [145]. We know, however, with certainty, from the teſtimony of Du Pleſſis Mornay, who negotiated the treaty between the two ſovereigns, that the king of Navarre was then at the head of five thouſand infantry; beſides five hundred gentlemen, and as many more harquebuſſiers, well mounted, and in the fineſt condition. Mornay even engaged, if orders for the purpoſe were iſſued by Henry the Third, that this body of troops ſhould be doubled in leſs than two months. But, the Hugonot party, of which the king of Navarre was the chief, furniſhed the reſources for levying, and maintaining them in the field. He was unable, from his own revenues, or dominions, to ſupport ſo heavy a charge [146].

Inability to reſiſt the royal army.

His numbers at Coutras.

[142] Memoires d'Aub. Remarques, p. 214. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 226.

[143] De Thou, vol. x. p. 19. Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 322.

[144] De Thou, vol. x. p. 590.

[145] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 292.

[146] Vie de Du Pleſſis Mornay. A Laide, 1647, p. 129.

Notwith-

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Court of Navarre.

Notwithſtanding the poverty and diſtreſſes of the king of Navarre, his court was crouded, gay, and voluptuous. It was ſometimes held at Pau, in the province of Bearn; but, more frequently, at Nerac, the capital of the duchy of Albret. At every period, but, particularly, when Margaret, queen of Navarre, was preſent, gallantry, diverſions, and feſtivities of every kind, rendered it magnificent. The picture which ſhe draws of it, in 1579, and 1580, is lively, and coloured with animation. "We paſſed," ſays ſhe, "the greater "part of our time at Nerac, where the court was ſo brilliant, that "we did not envy that of France."—"There was not any thing to "regret, except that the greater part of the nobility and gentlemen "were Hugonots: but, of the difference of religious ſentiment, no "mention was made; the king, my huſband, and his ſiſter, going "to their devotions, while I and my train went to hear maſs, in a "chapel, in the park. When the ſervice was ended, we aſſembled "again in a garden, embelliſhed with avenues of laurels and cy-"preſs, that bordered the river. In the afternoon and evening, a "ball was performed." She owns, that, far from impoſing any reſtraint on the irregularities of the king of Navarre, ſhe, on the contrary, aided, facilitated, and concealed his amours [147].

Margaret of Valois.

Abandoned to the moſt ſhameful exceſſes, and relying for impunity, on her deſcent from the blood of France, Margaret narrowly eſcaped from expiating her infidelities, by an ignominious death. Deſpiſed by her brother, Henry the Third, and become odious to her huſband; after having been driven with ignominy and diſgrace from the court of Paris, ſhe only owed her life to the clemency and humanity of the king of Navarre [148]. He himſelf, attached to the counteſs of Guiche, was diſpoſed to make every ſacrifice to his paſſion; and

[147] Hiſt. de Marg. p. 323. Memoires de Marg. p. 176, 177.

[148] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 105. Lettres du Roi de Nav. in the Œuvres de Voltaire, vol. x. p. 236 and 237.

to

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to have legitimated his connexion with her by marriage, if he had not been prevented by the firm and generous exhortations of d'Aubigné [149]. The rough, but, ſalutary remonſtrances of Sully, at a ſubſequent period of his life, were alike effectual, when ready to give his hand to Gabrielle d'Eſtrees.

Number of his adherents.

Even in the moſt depreſſed ſtate of his fortune, the courage, affability, and frankneſs of character which diſtinguiſhed the king of Navarre, acquired him numerous followers. In 1576, at an interview which took place between him and the queen-mother, in the town of Thouars in Poitou, he ſeduced into his ſervice, thirty-two gentlemen of the French court [150]. At Pau and Nerac, he was conſtantly ſurrounded by Catholic, as well as Hugonot nobles; but, ſuch was the animoſity which ſubſiſted between them, that they were more than once on the point of cutting each other in pieces. The king was accuſtomed to ſay, that his obligations to the adherence of the Catholics, were much greater than to the Proteſtants; as the former ſerved him upon principles more diſintereſted, and in contradiction to their religious prejudices [151].

Reaſons for his refuſal to abjure the reformed religion.

It may excite ſome degree of ſurprize, that, importuned as he was by Henry the Third, to reſume the profeſſion of the Romiſh faith, and tempted by the almoſt certain reverſion of the greateſt crown in Europe, he ſhould yet have pertinaciouſly declined to adopt the meaſure. We muſt attribute his conduct, partly to conviction, and partly to policy. The feeble character of the French king; the inſidious enmity of Catherine of Medecis; and the diſhonor, as well as danger, attached to ſuch a ſtep, deterred him, and delayed its conſummation. But, he felt its neceſſity, if he ever attained to the throne of France; and though he refuſed, after a long ſtruggle and much irreſolution, to comply with

[149] Memoires d'Aub. p. 123—129.
[150] Ibid. p. 52.
[151] Sully, vol. i. p. 17.

Epernon's

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Epernon's ſolicitations in 1584; yet, on that, and on every occaſion, he profeſſed his readineſs to receive inſtruction, and prepared the minds of the nation for his final converſion. It may be fairly aſſerted, that whatever virtues or endowments he poſſeſſed, he never could have been peaceably and generally recognized for ſovereign of France, if he had not aſſumed the religion of the people, over whom he was called to reign [152].

[152] Lettre de du Freſne, in the Memoires de Villeroy, vol. ii. p. 77—175.

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State of literature, the ſciences, and the fine arts.—Natural philoſophy.—Aſtronomy.—Pharmacy.—Juriſprudence.—Eloquence.—Hiſtory.—Poetry.—Polite letters.—Erudition of the age.—Imitation of the antients.—Protection of learning, and learned men.—Progreſs of the art of printing.—Libels.—Libraries.—State of the drama.—Paſſion for romances.—Mode, and ſeminaries of education.

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Glory, annexed to the protection of letters.

THE grandeur of ſtates and ſovereigns is not determined ſolely by their extent of dominion, by the magnitude of their fleets and armies, or even by the general riches and felicity of the people. To be entitled to the appellation of Great, it is neceſſary that the arts and ſciences ſhould be held in honor, and that polite letters ſhould be univerſally cultivated and diffuſed. It is the acknowledged privilege of genius, to immortalize not only its poſſeſſors, but, even its protectors. The princes of Medecis, though in fact, only the firſt merchants of Italy, and the firſt citizens of a ſmall republic, ſituated among the Apennines; have acquired a reputation far ſuperior to that of the moſt powerful monarchs, their contemporaries. Francis the Firſt, who emulated their fame, and followed their traces, diffuſed the luſtre of his name over Europe, more by the protection and cultivation of letters, than by his victories, or military atchievements. His exertions to awaken the dormant talents of his ſubjects, were not ineffectual; and in the courſe of a reign of more than thirty years, he had the ſatisfaction to behold the commencement of that light, which gradually ſpreading and augmenting, attained to its meridian, in the following century, under Louis the Fourteenth. His ſon, Henry the Second, however inferior in the enthuſiaſtic love

Protection, extended to them by Francis the Firſt,

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and by his ſucceſſors.

of arts and ſciences, extended his munificence to their profeſſors [1]. Even Charles the Ninth, in the intervals of civil war and maſſacre, unbent himſelf by the ſofter occupations of poetry and muſic, in the former of which he did not diſdain to compoſe [2]. He was accuſtomed to hold an academy, twice every week, in his own cabinet, at which men of letters and ladies aſſiſted, where queſtions of a literary nature were agitated and diſcuſſed [3]. It is clear, by the expreſſions of d'Aubigné, that Hugonots were not excluded from this ſociety. He may be regarded as a ſingular inſtance in the hiſtory of mankind, of a prince whoſe ferocity was not humanized by the ſtudy of letters. His brother and ſucceſſor, Henry the Third, immerſed in pleaſures, or engaged in hypocritical exerciſes of devotion, found little leiſure for the elegant reſearches of taſte and genius: he was, notwithſtanding, liberal in his donations to thoſe who were diſtinguiſhed by their talents in every branch of art; and Deſportes, the poet, held the ſame rank in his affections, which Ronſard had enjoyed in the favor of his predeceſſor [4].

State of ſcience.

When we conſider the ſtate of the ſciences, at the period of which we are treating, we muſt be compelled to admit, that they were only in their infancy. Scarcely any thing was taught in the ſchools, except dialectics, and the Ariſtotelian philoſophy. Such was the degree of idolatry paid to the Stagyrite, that Ramus, who periſhed at the maſſacre of Paris, was dragged through the ſtreets, and his body afterwards thrown into the Seine, by the ſtudents who followed the Ariſtotelian doctrines, which Ramus had combated and expoſed [5]. Natural philoſophy, founded on experiments, was, in a great meaſure, unknown; and even aſtronomy had not advanced beyond its firſt rudiments. Copernicus had, indeed, from an obſcure and re-

[1] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 55, and p. 59.

[2] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 64.

[3] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 184.

[4] L'Etoile, p. 88.

[5] Biograph. Diction. vol. xi. p. 28. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 55 and 56.

mote

mote city of Poliſh Pruſſia, diſcloſed the ſyſtem which bears his name, and acquainted the world with the true poſition and revolutions of the celeſtial bodies, towards the cloſe of the reign of Francis the Firſt. But, that great truth, combated by the ſuperſtitious prejudices of the times, made its way ſlowly and progreſſively, through the European nations. France does not ſeem to have poſſeſſed any aſtronomer of eminence, before the deceaſe of Henry the Third; and both in Germany and Italy, far greater diſcoveries had been made in the ſiſter ſciences of aſtronomy and philoſophy. True chemiſtry was equally neglected; while aſtrologers and alchemiſts, availing themſelves of the ignorance and credulity of princes, filled every court, and were held in univerſal eſtimation. Henry the Third, without either information, or examination, but, from deference to the Holy See, cauſed the Gregorian calendar and computation of time to be received among the French. It was, in ſome meaſure, ſurreptitiouſly regiſtered by the Parliament of Paris, in the abſence of the preſident, Harlay. Science had no ſhare whatever in its adoption, which took place immediately after its promulgation at Rome by Gregory the Thirteenth, on the 10th of December, 1582. That day was counted for the twentieth of the month[6]. Similar motives of obedience to the court of Rome, induced the duke of Anjou, then acknowledged as ſovereign of the Low Countries, to effect its introduction among the Flemings[7]. Before the year 1563, the French were accuſtomed to reckon from Eaſter day, as the firſt of the year. The famous chancellor l'Hopital, cauſed it to be altered to the firſt of January; but, the Parliament did not regiſter the edict till 1564[8].

Philoſophy.

Reception of the Gregorian calendar in France.

It may be juſtly queſtioned, whether pharmacy and ſurgery had attained to a much higher point of perfection, than the ſciences already enumerated. Anatomy was very imperfectly known, or ſtudied:

Pharmacy.

Anatomy.

[6] De Thou, vol. viii p. 662. Lettres de Paul de Foix, p. 611, and p. 616.

[7] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 662 and 663.

[8] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 119.

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ſcarcely had the prejudices which oppoſe themſelves to the diſſection of the human body, been overcome. Emetics were never adminiſtered; and ſome of the moſt powerful medicines, uſed in the cure of diſeaſes, were undiſcovered. The Peruvian bark, the only ſpecific in intermitting fevers, had not yet been imported from the New World, and lay concealed in the mountains of South America. Even the circulation of the blood was only ſurmiſed, and by no means aſcertained. Yet, the age produced ſome illuſtrious names, who drew from their contemporaries the moſt extravagant encomiums. Fernel, phyſician to Francis the Firſt, was regarded as a man of conſummate ſkill. He received a penſion of two thouſand, five hundred crowns, for having rendered Catherine of Medecis, then dauphineſs, capable of producing children. Her ſterility had given riſe to reports of an intention to repudiate that princeſs, who was no longer ſuſtained by the credit of Clement the Seventh [9]. Fernel's reputation was eclipſed by the fame of Ambroſe Paré, a Hugonot, whoſe talents exempted him from the maſſacre of Paris, by the perſonal interpoſition of Charles the Ninth [10]. With him, the ſcience of pharmacy, and the practice of ſurgery, may be ſaid to have ariſen among the French, from whom they were gradually diffuſed over the northern nations. His works, which appeared towards the concluſion of the reign of Henry the Third, and which were dedicated to that prince, bear teſtimony to the acuteneſs of his talents, the ſuperiority of his views, and the indefatigable attention paid by him, to ameliorate the mode of treating the objects of his care. In defiance of vulgar prejudices, and the remonſtrances of his countrymen, who were deſirous of concealing from the world, the myſteries of the medical profeſſion; Paré addreſſed his writings to mankind, not as his predeceſſors had been accuſtomed, under the veil of a learned language; but, in his own [11].

Fernel.

Paré.

[9] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 284. Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 55.

[10] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 166.

[11] Œuvres d'Ambroiſe Paré, a Lyon, 1652, Au Lecteur, p. 4, 5.

Before

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Before the year 1536, when he commenced his practice, as one of the ſurgeons attending on the army of Francis the Firſt, in Piémont; ſo ignorant were all the practitioners in that important branch of art, that the firſt elements of it were unknown. We can ſcarcely believe, that the preparation and ingredients of gunpowder were conſidered as poiſonous; and that it was univerſally cuſtomary, in order to deterge and cleanſe the wounds, cauſed by fire-arms, to apply to them boiling oil [12]. John de Vigo, a celebrated phyſician, whoſe writings and opinions were received as oracular and infallible, had recommended this pernicious application, previous to every other dreſſing, or digeſtive. Paré ingenuouſly confeſſes, that, ſubdued and awed by ſo high an authority, he purſued it; and it was only from the failure of a ſupply of oil in the camp, that he was compelled to ſubſtitute a leſs deſtructive application. "Yet, terrified," ſays he, "at my own boldneſs, in thus venturing "to deviate from the received mode of practice; and apprehenſive, "that I ſhould find the patients, whoſe wounds I had not cauterized "by the uſe of boiling oil, dead of poiſon; I was unable to ſleep, "and I roſe from my bed, at an early hour, to viſit them. But, be"yond my hopes, I found thoſe, to whom, from neceſſity, I had "adminiſtered a digeſtive of a milder nature, compoſed of the yolk "of eggs, oil of roſes, and turpentine, free from pain, inflamma"tion, or tumours, having repoſed well during the night. On the "contrary, the perſons, whoſe wounds had been waſhed with hot "oil, were in a ſtate of fever, with violent ſymptoms of every kind. "From that time, I reſolved never more to burn thus cruelly the "poor wretches, afflicted with gun-ſhot wounds [13]."

It was, therefore, in this inſtance, as in almoſt all the other diſcoveries of art, only accident, which firſt led the way to ſo beneficial an alteration in the practice of ſurgery. We may eaſily conceive, how prodigious muſt have been the mortality in camps and armies,

[12] Œuvres de Paré, au Lecteur, p. 265—267. [13] Ibid. p. 263, 264, and p. 782, 783.

under

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under the antient ſyſtem. Every page of Paré's works bears teſtimony to it. To his laborious reſearches, and unwearied exertions, was, likewiſe, due, the introduction and improvement of almoſt all the principal inſtruments, ſtill uſed in ſurgery. Thoſe for performing the operation of the trepan, were greatly perfected by him [14]; and the accumulated honors, preſents, and emoluments, conferred on him, not only by the French kings, but, by foreign princes and nobles, evince the high admiration entertained for his talents, all over Europe.

Surgery.

One of the moſt famous cures performed in ſurgery, during the period under our conſideration, was that of Francis, duke of Guiſe, wounded at the ſiege of Bologne, under Henry the Second. The ſtump of a lance which entered between his noſe and his eye, was extracted by Nicholas Lavernan, with ſo much delicacy and ſucceſs, as neither to impair his ſight in the ſmalleſt degree, nor to leave any unpleaſing ſcar. So deeply was it fixed in the duke's head, that, in order to draw it out, Lavernan was obliged to lay his foot upon the head of the patient, and to exert his utmoſt force [15]. The operation was eſteemed a maſter-piece of art and ſkill. We may judge

Styptics.

how little the uſe of ſtyptics was known as late as 1582, by the inſtance of William the Firſt, prince of Orange. After the wound that he received from the piſtol ball of Jaureguy, which paſſed through both his cheeks, hot irons were immediately applied to cauterize the parts. That expedient appeared, at firſt, to ſucceed; but, on the tenth day, the cruſt which had formed, fell: the bleeding recommenced, and with ſo much violence, that no means could be diſcovered of ſtopping it, or of cloſing the veſſels. In ſo critical an emergency, Leonard Botal, an Italian of Aſti, in Piemont, phyſician to the duke of Anjou, adviſed, as the only means left, to ſtop the wound by the application of the thumb, and to employ men who

[14] Œuvres de Paré, p. 787.

[15] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 121. Œuvres de Paré, p. 785.

ſhould

ſhould inceſſantly relieve each other, for the purpoſe. The advice was followed, and contributed to ſave the prince's life [16]. Tavannes loudly arraigns and condemns the practice of ſurgery, as it exiſted in his time. He ſays, that it was cuſtomary to open all gun-ſhot, or other wounds, with ſuch indiſcretion, as to produce impoſthumes, or diſcharges, more fatal to the patient than the original wound itſelf. It would ſeem, that few perſons recovered, or received a perfect cure. "The lancet," ſays he, "is more deſtructive than the ball [17]."

Study of juriſprudence.

Notwithſtanding the venality and corruption which polluted the courts of law, the ſtudy of juriſprudence was held in the higheſt honor, and the profeſſion of a civilian was equally reſpectable and profitable. Cujas, a native of Toulouſe, attained a vaſt reputation for his proficiency in the civil law, under the laſt princes of Valois. He was eſteemed an oracle of knowledge; and he received from his own ſovereign, as well as from foreigners, the moſt flattering marks of reſpect and conſideration [18].

Oratory of the bar.

Of the oratory of the bar, we have few ſpecimens remaining; but, from the deſcription given us by l'Hopital, of the celebrated pleading before the Parliament of Paris, under Henry the Second, in 1550; when the caſe of the Proteſtants maſſacred at Merindole and Cabrieres, was ſolemnly argued; we may judge that it had attained to no common degree of force, energy, and ſublimity [19].

Fees.

That the profeſſion of a lawyer, employed in civil, and criminal cauſes, was a very lucrative one, is equally apparent. Fees ſeem to have been nearly as ample, if the relative value of money be conſidered, as in the preſent age; but, they appear to have been given, rather as the recompence of ſucceſsful eloquence and exertion, than in every event of a ſuit. Under Henry the Second, we find a ſum equal almoſt to two pounds ſterling, offered by a rich client to his counſel, who had gained a cauſe of ſlender pecuniary conſequence, after a ſhort pleading of leſs than two hours. The money was re-

[16] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 614.
[17] Tavannes, p. 66 and 67.
[18] Papire Maſſon. in vita Cujas.
[19] Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. Epitres, p. 29—31.

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fuſed and returned, as inadequate to the trouble and merit; not without expreſſions of reſentment at ſo inſufficient a reward [20].

Eloquence.

Eloquence had not diveſted itſelf, in the ſixteenth century, of pedantry, affectation, and the falſe ornaments of a corrupt and unformed taſte. This ſtyle of oratory and declamation was long retained, and ſlowly abandoned. It is, notwithſtanding, matter of curious remark, that in the two harangues of Henry the Third to the States General, in 1577, and in 1588, the purity of diction, ſimplicity, and energy of the compoſition, might vie with thoſe of almoſt any period. The latter ſpeech is long, pathetic, and dignified; diſgraced by no unnatural alluſions, or conceits; but, containing a clear expoſition of the calamities of the kingdom, and exhorting, or pointing out the obvious, and neceſſary remedies. It might have been pronounced by Auguſtus, in the Roman Senate; or, by Louis the Fourteenth, at any period of his reign [21]. But, when we peruſe the ſpeeches of Montholon, keeper of the ſeals, and of Renaud de Beaune, archbiſhop of Bourges, in the ſame aſſembly, we find ourſelves tranſported to another century. Scripture, and mythology, profane and ſacred hiſtory, are ranſacked for matter. Joſhua, and Solomon, and Aſa, are mingled with Druids, and princes of the Merovingian and Carlovingian lines [22]. The archbiſhop of Bourges compares the king, at the opening of his ſpeech, to Neſtor in wiſdom, and to Ulyſſes in eloquence. After a compliment to the queen-mother, whom he denominates another Irené; he exhorts Henry to emulate the example and heroic actions of Hercules and Theſeus; of Moſes, Joſhua, Nebuchadnezzar, Cyrus, David, Manaſſes, Auguſtus, Veſpaſian, and Mithridates. He proceeds to draw a parallel between Solomon and the French monarch; concluding by a fervent wiſh, that he might exceed in longevity, Arganthonius, king of Gibraltar [23].

Style of Henry the Third's harangue.

Speeches of Montholon, and Bourges.

[20] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 88 and 89.

[21] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 448—451; and vol. x. p. 373—383.

[22] De Thou, vol. x. p. 383—389.

[23] Ibid. p. 389—391.

If

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Harangue of Bellievre to Elizabeth.

If we would wiſh to form a perfect idea of the ſpecies of eloquence then uſed by ſtateſmen and miniſters, we have only to peruſe the harangue of Bellievre, the French embaſſador, to Elizabeth, queen of England, pronounced in 1587. The motive of his addreſs, was to deprecate, and prevent the execution of the unfortunate Mary, queen of Scots. Bellievre, in order to prove that ſovereigns are not amenable to any earthly tribunal, cites a hymn of Callimachus, who ſays, that Jupiter alone can judge kings. Having remarked from Plato, that the nature of ordinary men is compoſed of iron and lead, while that of princes is formed of gold; he proves by citations from Homer and Virgil, as well as by the example of Xenocrates, how ſacred the rights of hoſpitality have been ever eſteemed. He reminds her of Alexander's treatment of the Thebans, taken in the Perſian camp; and of Totila's conduct towards Antiſtia, the wife of Boethius. Having compared the Scottiſh queen to Conradin, beheaded by Charles of Anjou, and to Saul, when in the power of David; he next talks of Regulus and Elius Verus. But, above all, he implores her to imitate the empreſs Livia, in her advice to Auguſtus, reſpecting the conſpiracy of Cinna and Pompey [24]. Elizabeth, who wanted no reaſons, nor precedents, to juſtify a meaſure, on which ſhe had long determined; heard the embaſſador patiently: oppoſed to the authorities and examples which he had ſo laborioufly quoted, others, favorable to her own intentions; and ſtruck off the head of her priſoner [25].

Hiſtory.

No great, nor eminent hiſtorian aroſe in France, during the period under our review. Comines belongs to the preceding age; and neither De Thou, nor Davila, had yet appeared; if, indeed, the latter can, with ſtrictneſs, be regarded as a French writer. Henry the Second, at the ſolicitation of the cardinal of Lorrain, had named a hiſtoriographer; annexed to the title a ſalary of about ſixty

[24] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 627—637.

[25] Ibid. p. 637.

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pounds ſterling; and even furniſhed materials for the hiſtory of his own reign and exploits: but, no progreſs was made in the work [26]. We cannot ſufficiently regret, that the Memoirs, compoſed by Coligni, upon the events of his own time, and in particular, upon the civil wars, do not exiſt. The manuſcript, found after the admiral's death, was brought to Charles the Ninth, and burnt by advice of marſhal Retz [27]. Montluc is only a plain, unlettered ſoldier, who commemorates his own military actions, under the name of "Commentaries." The "political and military Diſcourſes" of La Noue, breathe the candour, veracity, and ſound reflexion, by which, in every part of his life, their author was diſtinguiſhed: but, they cannot emulate the praiſe of hiſtory. Tavannes's "Memoirs" contain much valuable and ſecret information on the events to which he was witneſs, and many of which he directed, or adviſed. But, it is to be lamented, that his ſon, who gave them to the world, has mutilated, altered, and defaced them in numerous particulars. Caſtelnau muſt be eſteemed the fineſt writer of the four: he is modeſt, ſuccinct, clear, and perfectly well informed upon all the points which he relates, or diſcuſſes. He is, notwithſtanding, inferior in every point of view, to his model, Philip de Comines.

Montluc.

La Noue.

Tavannes.

Caſtelnau.

French language.

The French language had not attained either to elegance, or purity, before the acceſſion of Henry the Second. Men of taſte and genius diſdained to employ it as the vehicle of their compoſitions.

Poetry.

Latin was commonly uſed by the poets; who found their own language too rough and unharmonious, for the fetters of verſe. The fineſt productions of that kind before the middle of the ſixteenth century, were in Latin. Marot, who eclipſed the fame of all his predeceſſors, firſt quitted the language of Horace, to adopt that of his own country [28]. The names, and works of St. Gelais, Jodelle, Baif, Bel-

Preference given to the Latin language.

[26] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 52—55.

[27] Ibid. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 197 and 198.

[28] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 412—414. Vie de Ronſard, par Binet, Paris, 1604, p. 128, and p. 175.

leau,

leau, Dorat, and Deſportes, who formed the admiration of the court, under Francis the Firſt and his deſcendants, are now in a great meaſure forgotten; or, only remembered by ſome happy lines, which have eſcaped the general oblivion. In all their writings, a redundancy of learning, and a ſervile imitation of the antients, is viſible. Charmed with the great models of Greece and Rome, they dreſſed themſelves in their borrowed ornaments, without reflecting that the grace and delicacy of the original, could not be transfuſed, or preſerved in the copy. CHAP. IV.

Marot may be regarded as the father and creator of the French verſe. To him is due the invention of the Sonnet, the Rondeau, and the Madrigal, which were unknown before the ſixteenth century, in France [29]. He flouriſhed during the reign of Francis the Firſt, by whom he was careſſed, protected, and rewarded; but, his religious opinions, which were ſuppoſed to be tinctured with hereſy, compelled him to quit the kingdom, and to ſeek an aſylum at Geneva. He died in a ſpecies of exile, at Turin, in Piémont, which was then occupied by the French forces. This event took place in 1544 [30]. Such was the elegance and beauty of his verſification in his native language, that none of the poets, if we except Ronſard, who formed the "Pleiad," or conſtellation of poetic genius, under the laſt princes of Valois, could equal him in thoſe endowments [31]. La Fontaine, in the enſuing century, confeſſed his admiration for, and his obligations to Marot, as one of his maſters, and models [32]. The indecencies, to be found in his compoſitions, are, in a great degree, to be charged to the taſte, or manners of the period in which he lived; and may derive ſome apology, if not juſtification, from reflecting, that ſcarcely any of the greateſt Roman poets of the Auguſtan age, are free from Marot.

[29] Œuvres de Marot, 2 vols. Geneve, paſſim. Baillet, Jugement ſur les Poëtes, tom. iii. p. 206.

[30] Bayle. Dict. Art. "Marot," p. 154, 155.

[31] La Bruyere, Caracteres, p. 82.

[32] La Fontaine, Ouvrages Poſthumes, p. 107.

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the ſame blemiſhes. Nothing could exceed the vogue, which Marot's Tranſlation of the Pſalms into French, obtained, under Francis the Firſt. The emperor, Charles the Fifth, to whom he preſented them, rewarded him by a donation of near two hundred pounds ſterling; a ſum of very conſiderable magnitude in that century; and which, even in this, would not be eſteemed ſmall [33].

St. Gelais.

St. Gelais was the contemporary, and the rival of Marot; but, with inferior talents and reputation. His verſes are eaſy, flowing, and ſometimes beautiful; ornamented with mythological alluſions, and a variety of learning. The greater part of his compoſitions are on ſubjects of a light and temporary nature, calculated for the amuſement of a gay and voluptuous court; ſuch as were thoſe of Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second. He ſurvived his competitor Marot, and died at Paris, in 1558 [34].

Jodelle.

To Jodelle is due the revival of tragedy, as formed upon the models of antiquity. His "Cleopatra" was performed, with incredible applauſe, by order of Henry the Second, at Paris [35]. Belleau is principally known by his tranſlations of the Odes of Anacreon. But, neither he, nor Dorat, could conteſt the pre-eminence of poetical fame and genius, with Ronſard. The invention of Anagrams, a paſſion for which, became univerſal among the French, is attributed to Dorat [36].

Deſportes.

Deſportes may be ſaid to terminate the liſt of poets, who flouriſhed under the laſt kings of Valois. He was enriched by the profuſion of Henry the Third, and even acted no inconſiderable political part, during the reign of Henry the Fourth. Deſportes is the Tibullus of France, amorous, impaſſioned, and querulous. His elegies, though unequal in purity and elegance, to thoſe of the Roman poet, are neither deficient in ſoftneſs, nor in harmony. He accompanied his

[33] Bayle. Dict. Article "Marot," p. 160.
[34] Œuvres de St. Gelais, paſſim.
[35] Recherches de Paſquier, lib. vii. cap. vii. p. 618. Bayle. Dict. Art. "Jodelle," and "Belleau." Vie de Ronſard, p. 139.
[36] Bayle. Dict. Art. "Dorat," p. 618.

patron

patron and maſter, the duke of Anjou, into Poland; and he gives, in one of his poetical compoſitions, a hideous picture of the Poliſh manners, country, and nobility [37]. In order to ſooth the diſtreſs of Henry the Third for the loſs of his two minions, Quelus and Maugiron, killed in a duel; Deſportes did not heſitate to proſtitute his talents, by compoſing epitaphs to their memory, and exhauſting panegyric in their praiſe [38]. He was liberally rewarded for theſe ſervile offerings of the muſe, by a prince, whoſe munificence towards his favorites, knew no limits.

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The pre-eminence of poetical genius among the French, during the ſixteenth century, is unqueſtionably due to Ronſard. The univerſality of his talents, the extent and variety of his compoſitions, the profound erudition ſcattered throughout his writings, and the ſplendor of his diction, eclipſed thoſe of all his contemporaries. To him, may be attributed the introduction of the higher and more ſublime ſpecies of poetry. The "Franciad," dedicated to Charles the Ninth, in whoſe honor it is compoſed, was the firſt epic poem, ſtrictly ſo denominated, that appeared in the French language. It was left imperfect, and unfiniſhed, on account of the premature and early death of that prince [39]. However inferior to the great models of antiquity, which he copied, the "Franciad" of Ronſard, is neither defective in grandeur of conception, luxuriancy of fancy, nor harmony of verſification.

With him, aroſe comedy, likewiſe, in France. The "Plutus" of Ariſtophanes, which he tranſlated, was the earlieſt production of that kind, given to the inhabitants of Paris. It was performed, under the reign of Henry the Second, at the theatre of Coqueret, with univerſal applauſe [40]. The diverſity of his compoſitions, in every branch of poetry, excites equal admiration and aſtoniſhment. If he was compared with Homer and Virgil, he may, with equal juſtice, be

[37] Œuvres de des Portes, Antwerp, 1591, p. 427, 428.

[38] Ibid. p. 478—481.

[39] Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. Paris, 1604, p. 1—213, paſſim.

[40] Vie de Ronſard, p. 125.

cited.

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cited as the rival of Anacreon, Pindar, and Catullus. In many of his lighter pieces, which he entitles "Gayetez," we trace all the hilarity and wanton mirth of the Ionian poet. His "Dythirambics" contain the rich ſtream of harmony, and the unfettered grace of Pindar. The poem, compoſed by him, to commemorate the feſtive offering of a goat, adorned with garlands, which was preſented as a teſtimony of homage to the genius of Jodelle, is peculiarly beautiful [41]. The "Sonnets" of Ronſard to his miſtreſs, may be compared, in warmth and tenderneſs, with thoſe of Catullus, to Leſbia. Even inanimate objects derived celebrity, and attained immortality, from his pen. The fountain of "Bellerie," in the Vendomois, became ſcarcely leſs renowned, than the claſſical ſpring of Blanduſia; and was one of his favorite ſubjects of poetic deſcription. He frequently retired to it, as Petrarch did to Vaucluſe, there to indulge his penſive meditations [42]. Like Deſportes, he did not refuſe to commemorate the minions of Henry the Third. His epitaphs on Quelus and Maugiron, are elegant compoſitions, and models of courtly panegyric [43]. If he is thought to have degraded the dignity of poetry, by compoſing an epitaph on the greyhound of Charles the Ninth, or the lap-dog of Madame de Villeroy; it may be remembered, that Pope, the proudeſt poet of the preſent century, who boaſts perpetually of his independance, and who affects to carry his indifference for crowned heads almoſt to contempt, was not aſhamed to write a diſtich for the Prince of Wales's dog at Kew. Ronſard conſulted more the majeſty of the weeping muſe, in his epitaphs on the conſtable Montmorenci, and on Philip de Comines [44].

From his earlieſt years, he was the companion and attendant of kings. After having accompanied James the Fifth of Scotland, on his return from France to his own dominions, as one of his pages; he

[41] Œuvres de Ronſard, "Gayetez," p. 333—346.

[42] Vie de Ronſard, p. 149, and p. 178.

[43] Œuvres de Ronſard, "Epitaphes," p. 87—89.

[44] Ibid. p. 47—55, and p. 60—61, and p. 87—103.

paſſed

paſſed into the ſervice of Charles, duke of Orleans, youngeſt of the three ſons of Francis the Firſt [45]. Henry the Second aſſociated him to all his paſtimes, and peculiarly to the martial exerciſes and diverſions, in which that monarch excelled. The force and addreſs of Ronſard in theſe exhibitions of corporal ſtrength and proweſs, were not leſs conſpicuous, than the elegance of his intellectual endowments [46]. Charles the Ninth expreſſed for him the moſt partial affection, commanded him not to quit the court, and enriched him by the donation of various abbies, and eccleſiaſtical preferments. The verſes of Charles, addreſſed to Ronſard, are to be found among the works of the poet; and if they do little credit to the talents of the king, they, at leaſt, diſplay his attachment to the muſes [47]. Under his ſucceſſor, Henry the Third, Ronſard was choſen for one of the members of an academy, in which the principal men of letters met, to converſe, and to communicate their reſpective compoſitions. It was held at the palace of the Louvre, in Henry's preſence [48].

Nor was his celebrity confined to France. It extended to other kingdoms, and was only limited by the language in which he wrote. Elizabeth, queen of England, delighted in his writings, and expreſſed her admiration for their author [49]. Even the unfortunate Mary, queen of Scots, to whoſe charms he had done homage during the tranſitory reign of her firſt huſband, Francis the Second; in her ſolitary impriſonment at Tutbury and Fotheringay caſtles, ſoothed her calamities, by the peruſal of Ronſard's works. As a proof of her eſteem, ſhe ſent him, in 1583, by Nau, her ſecretary, a ſilver buffet, valued at a thouſand crowns, with this inſcription on it, "A Ronſard, l'Apollon de la Source des Muſes [50]." At the ceremony of the "Floral Games," inſtituted and held in the city of Toulouſe, the preſidents, parliament, and people, unani-

[45] Vie de Ronſard, p. 115, 116.

[46] Ibid. p. 119, 120.

[47] Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. p. 217—223. Vie de Ronſard, p. 141—144.

[48] Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. iii. p. 176. and p. 147.

[49] Vie de Ronſard, p. 147.

[50] Ibid. p. 147, 148.

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mouſly decreed the pre-eminence to Ronſard. Not ſatisfied with conferring on him a wreath of eglantine, the cuſtomary reward of the victorious poet; they ſent him a ſtatue of Minerva in maſſy ſilver, accompanied with the moſt flattering teſtimonies of their admiration [51]. His funeral was attended by the moſt illuſtrious perſons in France, for rank, talents, and virtue. The dukes of Angouleme and Joyeuſe, together with the cardinal of Bourbon, and the principal members of the Parliament of Paris, did not diſdain to follow in the cavalcade, and to perform the laſt honors to ſo diſtinguiſhed a genius [52]. Du Perron, who became afterwards a cardinal, and who had already diſplayed talents of various kinds, pronounced his funeral oration [53]. Such was the reſpect and eſtimation in which his works were held by foreign nations, that they were read as models of poetic beauty, in all the French ſchools of Flanders, England, Germany, and Poland [54]. Like Hadrian, when expiring, he compoſed ſome lines, addreſſed to his departing ſoul, which are not inferior in vivacity, to thoſe attributed to the Roman emperor; of which they may be eſteemed a parody [55]. Criticiſm itſelf was ſilent, or converted to panegyric, when employed upon Ronſard; and Scaliger, whoſe pen inſpired ſo much dread among his contemporaries, dedicated to him, his favorite Anacreontics. We may judge of the reverential awe which Scaliger felt for the French poet, by the language which he uſes, in his addreſs. It is ſuch as Horace would have adopted, when ſpeaking of Homer:

" Quo te carmine, qua prece,
" Quo pingui genium thure, adeam tuum,
" Immenſi ſobolem ætheris,
" Qui muſis animi prodigus, imperas [56] ?"

Notwithſtanding the obligations which the French language owes to Ronſard, in whoſe hands it became copious, rich, and melodious,

[51] Vie de Ronſard, p. 137, 138.
[52] Ibid. p. 159, 160.
[53] Oraiſon funebre de du Perron, p. 184—240.
[54] Vie de Ronſard, p. 168, 169.
[55] Ibid. p. 151.
[56] Ibid. p. 167, 168.

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he is not exempt from defects. But, they are, perhaps, more the faults of the age, than of the poet. His productions are loaded with mythology and fable; nor can we acquit him of some degree of impiety and profanation, in comparing the labours of Hercules, to those of Jesus Christ [57].

Rabelais. Rabelais and Montaigne, neither of whom were poets, are the only authors of the period, in the walk of polite letters, who can be said to have escaped the general fate of their contemporaries, and to be read, after two centuries, beyond the limits of France. Rabelais, notwithstanding the extreme indecency and low buffoonery of his writings, contains so much genuine and original humor, so much grotesque fancy, incidents so comic, satire so delicate and keen, mixed with learning so various and profound, that he must be for ever agreeable to mankind. It is probable, that the greater number of those who peruse the "History of Gargantua and Pantagruel," see in the work, only its eccentric and extravagant outside. But, the ridicule of the church of Rome, of the Catholic religion, its ceremonies and injunctions, escapes continually through the disguise, under which Rabelais found it requisite to conceal so hazardous an attempt. It may excite some surprize, that a man who evidently despised and disbelieved the most essential articles of the Romish faith, should, after practising medicine, have been promoted to a prebend in a collegiate church, and made curate of Meudon, near Paris [58]. The cardinal du Bellai, his patron, who protected, and preferred him, was not more persuaded of the sanctity of the religion, which he professed. That prelate, in defiance of the injunctions of the Romish see, had not hesitated to contract a marriage with madame de Chatillon, though motives of convenience induced him to conceal the transaction [59]. The veil of affected folly and absurdity, under which Rabelais aimed his shafts at popes and princes, saved him from punish-

His ridicule of the Romish church.

[57] Bayle. Dict. art. "Ronsard," p. 895, 896.
[58] Œuvres de Rabelais, Vie, vol. i. p. 4. —180.
[59] Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 177

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ment; while the Proteſtants, who gravely and moroſely attacked the pontifical power and dignity, were ſeized and committed to the flames. Rabelais belongs to the age of Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second; under the latter of which kings he ended his days, at an advanced period of life.

Montaigne.

Montaigne flouriſhed under the laſt princes of Valois, and ſurvived the extinction of that family. His "Eſſays" are equally original, and not leſs amuſing, than the writings of Rabelais. He was a man of condition; and the careleſs, but, graceful negligence of a gentleman, characterizes his ſtyle. Though he talks perpetually, and almoſt excluſively, of himſelf, his egotiſm never offends, and generally entertains. Eaſe and nature ſeem to guide his pen; which is, however, diſgraced by equal tranſgreſſions of decency, with thoſe to be found in Rabelais, and in Brantome. An intimate acquaintance with the Greek and Roman writers, is viſible throughout every page of Montaigne. He oppreſſes us with citations from all the poets; and he never diſdains to fortify, or ſupport his poſitions, by an appeal to their authority. He is a ſceptic, and takes little pains to diſguiſe it, though he choſe to live and die within the pale of the Catholic church. We may judge of the avidity with which his Eſſays were devoured by the public, when we reflect, that even civil war, and every kind of internal calamity, could not impede their reception. They firſt appeared in 1580, under Henry the Third; and in 1588, a period of rebellion and anarchy, he publiſhed the fifth edition, at Paris, amidſt the convulſions of the League [60].

Genius of his writings.

Architecture.

Catherine of Medecis, deſcended from a family immortalized by their protection of all the arts, and deſirous of tranſplanting them into France, conſtructed the palace of the Tuilleries, which ſhe commenced in 1564, ſoon after the termination of the firſt civil wars. Philibert de Lorme, and John Bullan, were the architects whom ſhe employed to raiſe that ſtately edifice, which ſhe completed before her

[60] Journal du Voyage de Montaigne, Diſc. prelim, vol. i. p. 64 and 65.

deceaſe,

deceaſe, notwithſtanding the troubles of the kingdom, and the exhauſted ſtate of the finances[61]. It was, unqueſtionably, the fineſt monument of architecture, then to be found, beyond the Alps. Louis de Foix, a native of Paris, began, in 1584, the celebrated tower of Cordouan, at the mouth of the river Garonne; deſigned as a pharos, or light-houſe, to direct the ſhips bound to, and from, the port of Bourdeaux. Its poſition was on a rock in the midſt of the ſea, expoſed to the utmoſt fury of the elements. Three ſtories, ornamented with the different orders of architecture, and terminating pyramidically, formed the tower; whoſe ſolidity, proportions, and ſtrength, have ſecured its duration to the preſent time. It was not entirely completed till the year 1611[62]. CHAP. IV.

Painting, and ſculpture.

No regular ſchool of painting, or ſculpture, had appeared in France, before the extinction of the race of Valois. The exertions of Francis the Firſt had nevertheleſs awakened the genius of the nation, in both thoſe branches of art. John Gougeon, and Germain Pillon, were eſteemed very expert ſculptors, and had attained to a high degree of reputation, under Henry the Third[63]. Leonardo da Vinci, who expired in the arms of Francis the Firſt, was an Italian, and does not ſeem to have left behind him any eminent pupils. Scarcely a ſingle ſtatue of bronze, or of marble, ornamented the metropolis, in 1589. The monuments, erected by Henry, to the memory of his three minions, St. Megrin, Quelus, and Maugiron, in the church of St. Paul, which were compoſed of the moſt coſtly materials; had been demoliſhed by the fury of the Pariſians, on their receiving the intelligence of the aſſaſſinations committed at Blois[64]. Medals, commemorative of great, or auſpicious events, were frequently ſtruck, and ſcattered among the people, or diſtributed as marks of diſtinction. Conſiderable delicacy was diſplayed in their fabrication, as well as in the devices or legends, with

Medals.

[61] L'Art de Ver. vol. i. p. 648.
[62] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 204. Dict. Univ. de la France, vol. i. p. 467—469.
[63] Satyre Men. vol. ii. p. 403.
[64] L'Etoile, p. 114.

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which they were ornamented. Jane, queen of Navarre, in 1569, preſented gold medallions to the principal German commanders of the auxiliary army. On them were inſcribed mottos, containing an alluſion to their perilous ſituation, and religious union [65]. Three years afterwards, at the nuptials of Henry, king of Navarre, with Margaret of Valois, gold and ſilver medals were thrown to the populace. The inſcription, "Conſtricta hoc diſcordia vinculo," was deſigned to ſignify the extinction of paſt animoſities, to be produced by the marriage [66].

Erudition.

The feature which peculiarly diſtinguiſhed and characterized the age, was erudition. Letters, which had revived in Italy about the middle of the fifteenth century, did not penetrate into France till above ſixty years later. It was Francis the Firſt who cheriſhed, patronized, and rendered their ſtudy general. The productions of Athens and of Rome, in poetry, hiſtory, eloquence, and philoſophy, became known to the French; and all the beauties of the antients, were embelliſhed by the charms of novelty. Captivated with graces ſo much ſuperior to every other, and with which they had been hitherto unacquainted; they knew no limit to their enthuſiaſtic admiration. All claſſes of ſociety caught the infection: princes, nobles, ſoldiers, and even ladies, cultivated learning; and became familiar with the language of Cicero, and of Homer. Erudition was deemed neceſſary for attaining to employments of ſtate; and ambition derived ſupport from the ſtudy of letters. L'Hopital owed, in a great meaſure, his progreſſive elevation, through the various dignities of the law, to its higheſt eminence; not ſo much to his knowledge of juriſprudence, as to his reputation for ſcience [67]. Coligni, in the midſt of civil war, found leiſure to read the Roman writers, and converſed with fluency and elegance in Latin [68]. Mar-

Enthuſiaſm for the literary productions of antiquity.

Examples.

[65] Memoires de Caſt. vol. i. p. 241.
[66] Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 87.
[67] Trad. de l'Hop. Eclairciſſ. vol. i. p. 9 and 10.
[68] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 197.

ſhal

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ſhal Strozzi, though engaged during his whole life, in the tumult of a camp, tranſlated the Commentaries of Cæſar into Greek, with notes and applications calculated for rendering the original more intelligible, or uſeful, to men of the military profeſſion. "I have heard "Ronſard and Durant," adds Brantome, "expreſs their amazement "at the purity and eloquence of the Greek tranſlation, which, in "their eſtimation, was not inferior to the Latin of the Roman dic- "tator[69]." It was the ordinary amuſement of Henry the Third, to retire, after dinner, to his cloſet, with Baccio del Bene, and Corbinelli, two learned Florentines, who read to him the works of Polybius and of Tacitus, in their original languages[70]. Henry, king of Navarre, though naturally averſe to ſedentary and ſtudious occupations; yet, was verſed in Greek, and accuſtomed, from his infancy, to cite, or repeat paſſages from their poets and hiſtorians. It is a well-known anecdote, that, while yet a child, he adopted for his motto, the words, "ἢ νικαν, ἢ ἀποθανεῖν," either conquer, or die: and that he refuſed to explain their meaning to the queen-mother, Catherine of Medecis, who was anxious to know their import[71]. L'Hopital addreſſed many of his Latin epiſtles, to Margaret, daughter of Francis the Firſt, ducheſs of Savoy; and that princeſs, to whom her father, when expiring, recommended the protection of the muſes, improved herſelf by the frequent ſtudy of Cicero and of Horace[72]. When the Poliſh embaſſadors, in 1573, arrived at Paris, to lay their crown at the feet of the duke of Anjou; the biſhop of Cracow, one of the number, having harangued the young queen of Navarre, Margaret, in Latin; ſhe inſtantly replied in the ſame language, recapitulating, and anſwering every part of his ſpeech, with facility and preciſion[73]. Catherine of Medecis, leſs ſkilled in the languages of antiquity, employed an interpreter on the ſame occaſion. Her ſelection fell on

Strozzi.

Henry the Third, and the king of Navarre.

Princeſſes.

[69] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 261 and 262.

[70] Davila, p. 481.

[71] Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 248.

[72] Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. p. 123—134. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 706.

[73] Vie de Marg. p. 122.

Catherine

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Catherine de Clermont, one of the moſt beautiful and accompliſhed ladies of the court; but, not more eminent for the graces of her perſon, than for her erudition [74]. Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, and Renee, ducheſs of Ferrara, daughter of Louis the Twelfth, two princeſſes who embraced the reformed doctrines, were diſtinguiſhed by their proficiency in, as well as by their protection of learning.

Imitations of the antients.

To ſuch a point of perfection was the imitation of the antients carried, that many of the productions of l'Hopital, and of Morvilliers, biſhop of Orleans, were not diſtinguiſhable by the ableſt critics, from the writings of antiquity. The epiſtle of l'Hopital, to James du Faur, intitled "An Imprecation againſt Suits at Law," deceived the learned ſo completely, as to be not only attributed to various Roman poets; but, to exerciſe ingenuity in pointing out the interpolations and alterations, introduced into the original text [75]. We may ſee in d'Aubigné, how elegant were the Latin verſes, compoſed by the young nobility; and what facility they poſſeſſed in making them, upon every occaſion [76]. Even from the pageants and amuſements of the court, the Latin language was not excluded; and females of the higheſt diſtinction recited Roman poetry, with equal grace and elegance. At a ſpecies of maſque, repreſented before Henry the Second, at St. Germain, near Paris, in 1554; in which ſix ladies, or princeſſes, habited as Sybils, performed the principal parts; Mary, queen of Scots, then in very early youth, perſonated the Delphic Sybil. Addreſſing herſelf to the Dauphin, her deſtined huſband, who was afterwards Francis the Second, ſhe predicted in a diſtich, compoſed by St. Gelais, the poet, the future union, in his perſon, of the Britiſh and French crowns:

"Delphica, Delphini ſi mentem oracula tangunt,
"Britonibus junges regna Britanna tuis [77]."

[74] Vie de Marg. p. 122. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 102—105.

[75] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 137—144. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 494, and p. 504.

[76] D'Aub. Mem. p. 85, and p. 89.

[77] Œuvres Poetiq. de St. Gelais, a Paris, 1719, p. 12, 13.

A per-

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A perfect acquaintance with the Latin language, was an indiſpenſable qualification for embaſſadors to many of the European courts, and highly introductory to all foreign miſſions and employments [78]. French had not then been adopted as a general medium of converſation. Spaniſh was much more generally uſed; and it was the language of the Imperial court, as well as that of Madrid, till the reign of Rodolph the Second [79]. Montaigne was inſtructed in Latin, before he was permitted to learn his native language; and ſo perfectly did he poſſeſs it, that the celebrated Buchanan, who was one of his preceptors, confeſſed, that he apprehended converſing with his pupil [80]. D'Aubigné ſays, that at ſix years of age, he could read Latin, Greek, and Hebrew: when only in his eighth year, he tranſlated the "Crito" of Plato, into French [81]. Military men compoſed their own epitaphs, or thoſe of their friends, ſlain in action. "When la Caſe de "Mirambeau was killed in 1574," ſays de Thou; "in his boot was "found the following diſtich, written with his own hand, as if he "had foreſeen his end:

Univerſality and vogue of the Latin language.

"Deſine migrantem lugere, viator, et hoſpes.
"Non careo patria: me caret illa magis [82]."

The ſatirical ſonnets, which originated on a thouſand trifling ſubjects, and which were circulated in the courts of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, were rarely in French. Wits and ſatiriſts preferred the Latin, as more expreſſive, and equally intelligible. The ſix elegant lines, compoſed by a courtier, in 1577, upon the comet, which was then viſible, and whoſe appearance impreſſed Catherine of Medecis with ſo much terror; as well as moſt of the epigrams upon the minions, or miniſters of Henry the Third, were written in the lan-

Latin verſes.

[78] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 776.
[79] Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 78.
[80] Eſſais de Montaigne, vol. i. p. 254—256. Voyages de Montaigne, Diſc. Prelim. vol. i. p. 70 and 71. Biogr. Diction. vol. ix. p. 298.
[81] D'Aub. Mem. p. 4 and 5.
[82] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 45.

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guage and ſpirit of Martial[83]. Brantome, who is only a diſſolute man of the world, is yet an accompliſhed ſcholar.

Munificence to men of genius.

Never was greater munificence extended to men of genius, in every branch of art and ſcience, than by the princes of Valois. The bounties of Louis the Fourteenth were diſpenſed with more parade and oſtentation; but, they were neither more general, nor ſuperior in extent. Francis the Firſt, not ſatisfied with encouraging, and recompenſing literary merit in his own ſubjects, exerted himſelf to diſcover and reward it among every foreign nation. He ſent ſeveral learned men, at his own expence, to travel into Greece, and the countries of Aſia Minor, in order to collect antiquities, manuſcripts, and other monuments[84]. Royal profeſſors, with liberal pecuniary ſtipends, were appointed, to teach in the colleges, which he founded, or endowed. Such was his predilection for perſons diſtinguiſhed by a knowledge of letters, that he uſually made choice of them for embaſſies to the various European courts[85]. Paul Jovius, the famous hiſtorian, enjoyed a penſion of two hundred and fifty crowns, from the treaſury, during that monarch's life: but, the conſtable Montmorenci, with whoſe character and actions Jovius had taken ſome unwarrantable liberties, retrenched and ſtruck it off, at the acceſſion of Henry the Second[86]. Notwithſtanding this ſingle inſtance of reſentment, expreſſed by a miniſter, whoſe alienation to, and unacquaintance with letters, was well known; Henry diſplayed the ſame princely regard for them, which had characterized his father. He was ſo charmed with the "Cleopatra," a tragedy of Jodelle, as to give the author a preſent of two hundred and fifty crowns, beſides other gratifications[87]. Henry the Third preſented the poets, Ronſard and Baif, each, a thouſand crowns, as a recompence for the beautiful verſes, compoſed by them

Jovius.

Jodelle.

[83] L'Etoile, p. 25 and 26, and p. 37, and p. 80, and p. 108. Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 111, and p. 192 and 193.

[84] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 241.

[85] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 241. Biog. Diction. vol. ii. Artic. Budaus.

[86] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 231 and 232.

[87] Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 59.

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on the occaſion of his favorite, Joyeuſe's marriage [88]. Even religious prejudices and antipathies, which were ſo powerful in that age, did not prevent Henry the Third from ordering five hundred crowns to be preſented to Henry Etienne, a Hugonot, who had written a work of much celebrity, upon the excellence of the French language [89]. At the ceremony of the inauguration and inveſtiture of Francis, duke of Anjou, as ſovereign of the Netherlands, which was performed at Antwerp, in 1582; the deputies of the Proteſtants, in the act of homage and congratulation to their new prince, beſought of him to take under his protection, letters, and their profeſſors; and to honor them, according to the example left him by Francis the Firſt [90]. He promiſed to comply with the requeſt. Prelates and cardinals expended the revenues of their eccleſiaſtical preferments, in the patronage of genius. The vices and irregularities of the cardinal of Lorrain were concealed and almoſt forgotten, in the munificent largeſſes with which he conciliated literary favor. He was the Mecœnas of the court of Henry the Second, and his two immediate ſucceſſors [91].

Etienne.

Cardinal of Lorrain.

The art of printing, in the courſe of conſiderably more than a century, which had elapſed ſince its invention, had diffuſed very widely every ſpecies of knowledge, and penetrated among all orders of ſociety. The Morels, and the Etiennes, celebrated printers, carried the art at Paris, to a pitch of eminence, before the death of Henry the Second, in 1559 [92]. One of the former family, convicted of hereſy, was burnt in the ſucceeding reign [93]. Manutius, employed by the Venetians, and by various of the Romiſh pontiffs, had immortalized his own name, by giving to the world the moſt perfect and beautiful editions of Tully, as well as of many of the Greek and Roman writers. The fame of Aldus Manutius was

Art of printing.

Manutius.

[88] L'Etoile, p. 46.

[89] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 193.

[90] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 605.

[91] Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 416, Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. i. p. 46.

[92] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 206.

[93] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 103.

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ſuſtained by his ſon, who died in 1574[94]. Fourteen years afterwards, in 1588, Metayer, the royal printer at Paris, gave to the world a magnificent work, executed by order of the king. It contained the breviaries and prayers of the Romiſh ritual, in two folio volumes. The paper and the type were equally beautiful[95]. With the benefits and advantages of printing, were proportionably diffuſed its evils. Under a reign ſuch as that of Henry the Third, when the royal conſideration and authority were ſo much relaxed, the preſs teemed with libels of the moſt inſolent nature. The Hugonots, after the death of Charles the Ninth, publiſhed ſeveral ſevere and ſatirical pieces againſt Catherine of Medecis, then regent during the abſence of Henry in Poland. She was exhorted by the council of ſtate, to puniſh the authors with rigor. But, her magnanimity diſdained the advice, and permitted an uninterrupted courſe to all the accuſations or calumnies of her enemies[96]. Henry, on his return to France, did not imitate her in ſo ſhining a feature of her character. On the contrary, the only inſtances of rigor, which can be laid to his charge, and which contraſt extraordinarily with the lenity, or apathy, demonſtrated in his general adminiſtration; were exerted againſt libellers. In March, 1577, while the court was at Blois, a ſatirical compoſition, in which the king, the queen-mother, and other perſons, were treated with extreme ſeverity, was laid under the bolſter of Catherine of Medecis's bed. It is not leſs ridiculous, than true, that for this crime, of which the author was unknown, all the poets about the court were immediately ſeized, and ſent to priſon[97].

Libels, numerous.

Severity exerciſed towards libellers.

The faction of the League, from its firſt formation, ſeems to have been fully ſenſible of the importance of the preſs; and the leaders made bold and frequent application to the paſſions of the people, through its medium. In 1583, before the great convulſions which marked

[94] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 206. Biog. Dic. vol. ix. p. 52 and 53.

[95] Satyre Menippee, vol. ii. p. 150, 151.

[96] Davila, p. 418.

[97] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 177.

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the close of Henry's reign, Roziere, archdeacon of Toul, was brought before the council, to answer for having composed and published a book, entitled "Genealogy of the dukes of Lorrain and Bar." The object of it was to prove, that Hugh Capet and his descendants were only usurpers; and that the dukes of Lorrain were the genuine representatives of Charlemagne. Some passages in the work were, likewise, of a nature personally insulting and injurious to the king himself. Roziere would have infallibly expiated his offence by a public execution, if he had not been extricated by the powerful interposition of the duke of Lorrain, and the queen-mother [98]. Belleville, a Protestant gentleman, having, in the following year, committed a crime of less political magnitude, but, to which Henry was deeply sensible; by writing a satire on his private debaucheries, was instantly arrested. Convicted of being the author, he was drawn in a sledge to the place of execution, hanged, and his body, together with the work, thrown into the flames. All his estates and property were confiscated [99]. Even insanity formed no protection against the rigor of the laws, in cases of a libellous nature. Le Breton, a man of a heated and disordered imagination, bred to the bar, ventured in 1586, to stigmatize the magistrates and the sovereign, with equally betraying the cause of the poor. Although in the course of his trial, he gave numerous indications of an alienated mind, and notwithstanding the intercession of the judges themselves, who besought of the king to remit his punishment, he was condemned and executed [100]. These exemplary chastisements did not deter the heads of the League from publishing a variety of pamphlets, calculated to withdraw the obedience of the subject from the crown. Such was the avidity of the people to peruse them, and so odious was the government, that no penalties could deter the printers or venders from

Roziere.

Punishment of Belleville,

and of Le Breton.

[98] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 70 and 71.

[99] Ibid. p. 201 and 202. Mem. pour ser. a l'Hist. de Fr. p. 184.

[100] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 33 and 34. De Thou, vol. viii. p. 613—615. Mem. pour ser. a l'Hist. de Fr. p. 213 and 214.

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circulating them through the metropolis. Impoſitions of the groſſeſt nature, and invectives the moſt bitter, were not ſpared, and met with a ready belief. The univerſal defection which followed, evinced how powerful an engine was the preſs, in the hands of a deſperate and unprincipled faction [101].

Powerful effect of the preſs.

Libraries.

Public and private libraries were already become common and general, before 1589. Francis the Firſt began the celebrated one, at the palace of Fontainbleau, of which Budæus, one of the moſt learned men of the age, was conſtituted librarian. It had attained to very conſiderable magnitude, before that prince's death [102]. Catherine of Medecis, who emulated and imitated him, in the cultivation of letters, augmented it by ſo many coſtly works, manuſcripts, and books in every language, that, at her deceaſe, it was accounted the fineſt collection in Europe [103]. She was not ſatisfied with forming a library for the crown, but, exerted equal efforts to poſſeſs one, herſelf, at Chenonceaux, a caſtle in Touraine, to which ſhe frequently retired.

Library of Strozzi,

We may form ſome eſtimate of its ſize and value, by knowing, that at the death of marſhal Strozzi, ſhe added his collection of books, calculated to be worth above ſeven thouſand crowns, to her own library [104]. It is probable, that no private one in the kingdom, at that period, could compare in beauty, or magnificence, with Strozzi's, who was of Florentine extraction, and had bought the library of cardinal Rodolfo at Rome, a prelate eminent for his taſte and erudition [105].

and of l'Hopital.

The great chancellor, l'Hopital, in 1573, only eſtimates his books, excluſive of memoirs, antiquities, and medals, at the ſum of five hundred livres, or, little more than twenty pounds; and he expreſſes great anxiety in his will, that they may ſuffer no diminution [106].

State of the drama.

The drama may be ſaid to have been ſtill in its infancy, during the whole period under our review. It was not till after the acceſſion of

[101] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 16 and 17.
[102] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 241 and 242.
[103] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 132.
[104] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 263.
[105] Brant. ibid..
[106] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 492.

Henry

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Henry the Second, that any dramatic exhibition was performed in France. Only myſteries, and a ſort of holy pageants or repreſentations, were known under Francis the Firſt, although Leo the Tenth had introduced them in Italy, before the year 1520. The cardinal of Ferrara, archbiſhop of Lyons, one of the moſt magnificent and accompliſhed princes of the age, firſt preſented to the French court, the ſpectacle of a tragi-comedy, in 1549, at Lyons. The performers, male and female, were brought by him, at a great expence, from Italy; and the piece was repreſented in the language of that country, with ſo much grace and ſpirit, accompanied with interludes, that the king, queen, and ſpectators, expreſſed the utmoſt delight at the entertainment. It was ſaid to have coſt the cardinal five thouſand crowns [107]. St. Gelais, a French poet, having tranſlated the "Sophoniſba," of Triſſino, and ornamented or altered it in ſuch a manner, as to accommodate it to the taſte of his own country; it was performed by order of Catherine of Medecis, at Blois, ſoon after the commencement of Charles the Ninth's reign [108]. We find, that in 1564, a comedy, the ſubject of which was borrowed from Arioſto, was repreſented by her command, at Fontainbleau; and that the ducheſs of Angouleme, natural daughter of Henry the Second, together with the principal ladies of the court, filled the parts [109]. In 1571, at the feſtival of Nogent le Roi, where every ſpecies of diverſion was exhibited, and where Charles the Ninth was preſent, it is expreſsly ſtated that a comedy was played by the king's comedians [110].

Tragi-comedy. Its introduction into France.

St. Gelais.

A circumſtance which may appear more ſingular, is, that the Hugonots, during the fury of the civil wars, had dramatic amuſements. They were calculated to awaken, and to ſuſtain religious enthuſiaſm.

Dramatic amuſements of the Hugonots.

[107] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 20—22.

[108] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 51. Brant. ibid.

[109] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 56.

[110] Manuſcript de Bethune, N° 8722, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 81.

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The ducheſs of Rohan compoſed a tragedy, called "Holophernes," drawn from the hiſtory of Judith, contained in the apocryphal writings of Scripture; and which was repreſented at Rochelle [111]. In 1569, comedies were played at Niort in Poitou, while the Proteſtant armies aſſembled; and it may be doubted, whether the loſs of the battle of Jarnac ought not, in ſome meaſure, to be attributed to the negligence of the prince of Condé and the other commanders, who permitted the royal forces to collect in their neighbourhood, while they were engroſſed by theatrical entertainments. Such, at leaſt, was the opinion of the king of Navarre [112]. That the pieces repreſented before the court of France, were of a nature much too indecent to be exhibited before any modern audience, cannot be doubted, if we peruſe the ſpecimen given us by Brantome, of one which was acted by order of Catherine of Medecis, and which was compoſed by Cornelio Fiaſco, a captain of a galley. It was, indeed, in Italian; but, that language was perfectly familiar to the audience. The comedies of Mrs. Behn, under Charles the Second, are the only productions which can convey an adequate idea of Fiaſco's compoſition [113]. Political tranſactions were, likewiſe, frequently, brought on the ſtage, under the diſguiſe of pantomime, and preſented with little refinement of conception or action. In 1579, upon the reconciliation of the Walloon provinces of Flanders with Philip the Second, that event was groſsly figured, by the emblematical appearance of a cow, in one of the comic entertainments, exhibited at Paris. The king of Spain conducted the animal by a very ſlight ſtring, which, as often as it broke, was mended by the prince of Parma. Elizabeth, queen of England, the duke of Anjou, the prince of Orange, and many other perſonages, approached, with deſign to liberate the cow: but, ſhe rudely repulſed them, and, after many gambols, quietly delivered herſelf up to the

Comedies.

Indecency of the theatrical repreſentations.

Pantomimes.

[111] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 23.

[112] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 250.

[113] Brantome, vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 328.

Spaniſh

Spaniſh monarch"[114]. The application was obvious, and the piece met with great applauſe. CHAP. IV.

Romances. Notwithſtanding the favorable reception given to dramatic compoſitions, the predominant taſte of the age was not directed towards the theatre. The national enthuſiaſm was awakened and concentered in the ſtudy of romances; and it is not eaſy to conceive the paſſionate admiration with which that ſpecies of writing was received. To the heated and eccentric imaginations of the Spaniards, was due the famous romance of "Amadis," which ſoon afterwards appeared in French, dedicated to Francis the Firſt"[115]. Its vogue continued unabated, during that, and the ſucceeding reign. When we reflect, that theſe unnatural productions were filled with paſſionate declarations of love, with magicians, warriors, enchantments, battles, and marvellous adventures of a thouſand kinds; we ſhall not wonder at the fondneſs manifeſted for them by the French. All the predominant vices, or follies of the times, were artfully flattered in the romance of "Amadis of Gaul." Judicial combats, duels, amours, and magic, conſtituted the purſuits of the courtiers; who ſaw themſelves agreeably reflected in the moſt poliſhed, and flattering mirror. La Noue attributes to the rage for romances, many of the crimes and impieties, which diſtinguiſhed the two laſt reigns of the princes of Valois"[116].

Amadis.

Nature of thoſe productions.

Education. The difference in the education of youth under Francis the Firſt and Henry the Third, may, likewiſe, account, in a conſiderable degree, for the augmenting depravity of manners between thoſe two periods. We may judge of the ſeverity and ſimplicity of the former, by the curious relation which de Meſmes has left us in the diſcourſe upon his own life; where we ſee the exact detail of the ſtudies of the young men of condition in 1545. "I was ſent," ſays he,

[114] Strada, de Bello Belg. vol. iii. p. 93 and 94.
[115] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recher. p. 24. La Noue, p. 134.
[116] La Noue, ſixieme Diſc. p. 133—146.

"in

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Mode of education under Francis the Firſt.

" in that year, to Toulouſe, being fourteen years of age, to ſtudy " the laws, with my preceptor and my brother, under the ſuperin- " tendance of an antient gentleman, grey-headed, and who had long " wandered through the world. We were, for three years, au- " ditors; leading a much ſtricter life, and ſtudying more ſeverely, " than perſons of the preſent time would ſupport. We roſe at four " o'clock in the morning; and having addreſſed our prayers to " God, began our ſtudies at five; our great books under our arms, " our ink-ſtands and candleſticks in our hands. We liſtened to all " the lectures till ten o'clock, without interminſion; and then dined, " after having in haſte run over for half an hour, the ſubſtance of " the lectures, which we had taken down in writing. After dinner, " as a matter of amuſement, we read Sophocles, or Ariſtophanes, or " Euripides; and ſometimes, Demoſthenes, Cicero, Virgil, and " Horace. At one o'clock, to our ſtudies again: at five, home, to " repeat, and look out in our books, for the paſſages cited, till after " ſix. Then we ſupped, and read in Greek, or Latin. On holy- " days, we went to high maſs and veſpers: during the remainder " of the day, a little muſic and walking [117]." But, the ſtrictneſs of ſcholaſtic and collegiate diſcipline had diſappeared, with many other of the characteriſtic virtues of the age of Francis the Firſt, after the commencement of the civil wars. Profligacy, corruption, and debauchery, infected the aſylums of learning, and rendered the youth indolent, or diſſolute [118]. Maſters, or preceptors of ability, became rare. Almoſt all thoſe who excelled in teaching bodily exerciſes, were procured from Italy [119]. Numbers of young men of family, from theſe cauſes, were annually ſent into foreign countries, as affording ſuperior advantages and facilities of improvement. Between three and four hundred youths were ſuppoſed to quit France

Change under Henry the Third.

[117] Diſcours d'Henry de Meſmes, preſerved in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 775.

[118] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 11 and 12. La Noue, cinq. Diſc. p. 119, and p. 122, and p. 125.

[119] La Noue, p. 129.

every

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every year, to receive their education abroad; of whom more than half periſhed by diſeaſes, or in duels [120]. The moſt celebrated ſeminary of the kingdom, was the college of Navarre at Paris, during the greater part of the ſixteenth century. Henry the Third, Henry the Fourth, the duke of Mayenne, his brother, the cardinal of Guiſe, and almoſt all the children of the higheſt quality, received the firſt rudiments of polite knowledge and letters, at that ſchool [121].

College of Navarre.

The youth of the ſouthern provinces were chiefly educated in the college of Guienne, at Bourdeaux, of which Montaigne ſpeaks as the moſt frequented, and beſt regulated in France. Goveanus, the principal, was a man of uncommon abilities and learning. He flouriſhed under Francis the Firſt, and his ſucceſſor. The tragedies of Buchanan, compoſed in Latin, and juſtly regarded as productions of taſte and genius, were frequently perfbrmed by the ſtudents. Montaigne tells us, that he had himſelf filled many of the characters. We may ſee in his beautiful and maſterly eſſay, "de l'Inſtitution "des Enfans," addreſſed to Diana of Foix; the nature, genius, and mode, as well as all the characteriſtic vices and defects, of the ſyſtem of education in the ſixteenth century. There is not any eſſay of that amuſing and philoſophic writer, which conveys a higher idea of the enlargement of his mind, his knowledge of man, and his ſuperiority to the prejudices and errors of the age in which he lived [122].

College of Guienne.

It may, however, be confidently aſſerted, that the civil wars, which deſolated the kingdom for above thirty years, were not more injurious to the morals and general felicity of the people, than to learning, and the progreſs of the arts. The corrupt manners of Catherine of Medecis; the perſecutions and maſſacres, cauſed by the antipathy of the two religions; and the ferocity produced by ſcenes of anarchy and bloodſhed; checked the growth of literature, debaſed the taſte of the

Effect of the civil wars, on learning and the arts.

[120] La Noue, p. 126.
[121] Brantome, vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 129. Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 6, and p. 36.
[122] Eſſays de Montaigne, vol. i. p. 204—262, chap. xxv.

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nation, and plunged the country anew into barbariſm. From the era of Henry the Second's death, in 1559, to the peace of Vervins, in 1598, France cannot be ſaid to have enjoyed any permanent tranquillity. During ſeveral years of that period, the monarchy itſelf ſeemed to be menaced with diſſolution. Far from wondering that ſcience was not more diffuſed, it may rather excite aſtoniſhment, that in a time ſo calamitous, we are yet preſented with many ſhining models of genius, in almoſt every branch of literature.

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State of ſociety and manners.—Picture of the court, under Francis the Firſt.—Decline of its ſplendor, under the laſt princes of Valois.—Orders of knighthood.—Inſtitution of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.—Officers, and ceremonial of the court.—Palaces.—Caſtles of the nobility.—Dreſs.—Luxury of the table.—Furniture.—Carriages.—Litters.—Horſes.—Pages.—Lacqueys.—Buffoons.

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State of ſociety and manners.

AFTER having conſidered the French people under ſo many different aſpects, it is ſtill indiſpenſable, in order to complete the picture, that we take a ſurvey of the national manners. Man, in a ſtate of ſociety, is more forcibly diſtinguiſhed and characterized by the modes, uſages, and cuſtoms univerſally received, than by any civil, or political regulations. To the former, his ſubmiſſion is voluntary: to the latter, it is conſtrained and compulſory. The features of the nation, during the period under our immediate review, were uncommonly bold and prominent. A long period of inteſtine diſſenſion, approaching to anarchy, had liberated the ſubject from all reſtraint; and let looſe thoſe deſtructive paſſions, which, under a well-ordered government, are repreſſed by the vigilance of the magiſtrate, and the terror of puniſhment. The royal authority was become contemptible; the laws were deſtitute of vigor; and the facility of committing crimes was equalled by their impunity. All the majeſty which ſurrounded the throne under Francis the Firſt, and Henry the Second, had gradually diſappeared under the three ſucceeding princes; and while luxury diffuſed itſelf among the inferior orders, the ſplendor of the ſovereign diminiſhed.

General diſſolution of manners.

The French court, before the death of Louis the Twelfth, in 1515, was, like the nation itſelf, rude and unpoliſhed. It was his ſucceſſor,

Court of France, under Francis the Firſt,

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the young count of Angouleme, become king by the title of Francis the Firſt, who introduced into it a magnificence, previouſly unknown in Europe. Ladies, releaſed from the dungeons or caſtles, in which their huſbands and fathers immured them from the world: prelates, liberated from the ſuperintendance of their dioceſes: men of letters, magiſtrates, and a vaſt train of nobility and gentry, crouded to pay their homage to a prince, who was ſo well able to appreciate, and to cheriſh or recompence, every ſpecies of merit[1]. Manners may be ſaid to have gained as much by the change, as morals were perverted and corrupted. The king himſelf, while he protected letters, and revived the arts, gave a mortal wound to the chaſtity, fidelity, and virtue of the female ſex: his ſon, Henry the Second, imitated the example. But, thoſe monarchs, reſpected by their courtiers, obeyed by their ſubjects, and undiſturbed, in a great meaſure, by civil commotions; maintained a becoming dignity even in their vices, and were careful to veil from popular inſpection, the pleaſures or debaucheries of the palace. Their ſucceſſors, inexperienced, oppreſſed by misfortunes, plundered of their revenues, compelled to purchaſe loyalty and obedience, or prodigal of their treaſures; were no longer able to ſuſtain the preceding pomp and grandeur of the crown. At the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign, ſcarcely any traces of the magnificence of his grandfather's court, were to be diſcovered; and the univerſal diſorder of the times, levelled, in a conſiderable degree, the external diſtinction between the monarch and the ſubject.

and Henry the Second.

Change, under the laſt princes of Valois.

We may judge how groſs were the manners of the fifteenth century, when we know, that the kings of France admitted in their train a certain number of women of pleaſure, who followed the court wherever it moved. Quarters were regularly aſſigned to them, and juſtice was adminiſtered by an officer, excluſively appointed to that employment[2]. Women of honor and quality were unknown about the perſons and reſidence of Charles the Seventh, and Louis the Eleventh. Anne of

Introduction of ladies.

[1] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 281. [2] Brant. ibid. p. 282 and 283.

Bretagne

Bretagne began to aſſemble a ſelect band of ladies, whom ſhe retained near her, and whoſe conduct ſhe vigilantly ſuperintended: but, that aſſembly of perſons of both ſexes, held in the preſence of the ſovereign, and denominated in modern language, a drawing-room, originated with Francis the Firſt. Every ſpecies of luxury in dreſs, tables, and furniture, ſoon followed. It may excite ſome ſurprize to find, that on occaſion of marriages, Francis was accuſtomed to preſent dreſſes to the favorite ladies of his court, the materials of which were of the moſt coſtly kind [3]. But, in no article was ſo much expence incurred, and ſuch magnificence diſplayed, as in the proviſion made for the royal houſehold. Not only the table of the ſovereign, but, thoſe of all the greater and leſſer officers of ſtate, who were extremely numerous, were ſerved with the utmoſt profuſion and delicacy. Nor was it confined to the reſidence of the court, when ſtationary in the capital. Wherever Francis moved, even in the midſt of woods, or in villages, the ſame plenty was viſible [4]. The ſtrongeſt teſtimony to the ſplendid hoſpitality of that monarch, was borne by the emperor Charles the Fifth himſelf, during his viſit, in 1539. Having heard from the duke of Alva, how well the conſtable Montmorenci's table was covered, he determined to ſatisfy himſelf of the truth of the report. Diſappearing, therefore, unexpectedly, at the hour of dinner, he placed himſelf, uninvited, as a gueſt, at the conſtable's ſide. His amazement was extreme, at finding the fact exceed the account which he had received [5].

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Magnificence.

Hoſpitality.

Beſides the immediate officers of the houſehold, the court of Francis was crouded with cardinals, biſhops, and eccleſiaſtics, who expended the revenues of their ſees, or benefices, in regaling the more needy courtiers and gentlemen. Above twenty members of the ſacred college, were frequently reſident at the ſame time, in the metropolis; and even the Roman pontiffs themſelves could rarely boaſt of ſo numerous

Splendor of the court, under Francis the Firſt.

[3] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 270.
[4] Brant. ibid. p. 271 and 272.
[5] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 273 and 274.

an

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an aſſemblage [6]. Scarcely any diminution of the magnificence, or hoſpitality of the French monarchs, was viſible before the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth. Henry the Second maintained his father's inſtitutions, and ſucceeded to his propenſities. Catherine of Medecis, in every period of life, emulated the praiſe of munificence, and rendered her palace the ſcene of feſtivity, gallantry, and pleaſure [7].

Its decline, after the commencement of the civil wars.

But, the beginning of the civil wars, was the term of its real duration; and, whatever efforts might be exerted on particular occaſions, the dilapidation of the finances affixed inſurmountable obſtacles to the ſupport of the antient ſtate and majeſty of the crown. Retrenchments of every kind were made in the royal expence; and, far from being in a condition to maintain the hoſpitality, or ſplendor of Francis the Firſt, it was often found difficult under Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, to provide for the perſonal and moſt neceſſary expenditures of the king. Brantome draws a feeling picture of their diſtreſs, rendered, if poſſible, more poignant, by the compariſon with preceding times [8]. It attained, like every other national misfortune, to its higheſt point, during the reign of the laſt prince of the houſe of Valois. The garriſon of Metz, one of the moſt important frontier cities of the kingdom, was left for ſeveral months without pay, and was driven by neceſſity into a ſtate of mutiny and revolt [9]. Such was the poverty of the court in November, 1574, only three months after Henry's return to France, that, on the journey from Lyons to Avignon, the greater number of the royal pages were neceſſitated to leave their cloaks behind, as pledges, in order to procure bread. No ſalaries, or appointments, continued to be paid; and, if one of the farmers, or treaſurers of the revenue, had not aided the queen-mother by a loan of about two hundred pounds, ſhe would have remained unaccompanied by a ſingle lady of any deſcription [10].

Poverty under Henry the Third.

[6] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 286—288.
[7] Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 42—50.
[8] Ibid. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 275 and 276.
[9] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 249.
[10] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 47.

It

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It affords, at once, a curious proof of the poverty of the crown, and of the difficulty of raiſing ſupplies, to ſee, that only two years afterwards, it was ſeriouſly propoſed in council, by Catherine of Medecis, to apply to Muley Moluc, king of Fez, for a loan of money. If we did not know the fact from a perſon, who was preſent at its being agitated, and whoſe veracity is indiſputable, we might juſtly call it in queſtion. "On the 7th of February, 1577," ſays the duke of Nevers, in his Memoirs, "the queen-mother propoſed to diſpatch the Abbé Guadagni, to the king of Fez, to borrow two millions of gold." She likewiſe meant to authorize the envoy, to open a commercial treaty with Fez and Morocco, which, ſhe conceived, might prove very lucrative to the Moors, and to the French. It was hoped, that he might return with a favorable anſwer from the Mahometan prince, in two months. The treaſures of that monarch were eſtimated to exceed two millions and a half, ſterling. It is hard to ſay, by what arguments he could be induced to lend any part of it to Henry the Third. So wild and chimerical a propoſition does not ſeem to have been proſecuted, or adopted [11].

In the ſame year, we find that the king was unable to pay even his embaſſador at the court of Elizabeth, queen of England; or to continue the uſual ſtipends, which he was accuſtomed to allow to various perſons, from whom he received intelligence of the motions and deſigns of that princeſs [12]. The army was in the ſame predicament; and Sancy, who, in 1589, raiſed a body of Switzers, was reduced, after mortgaging the moſt valuable diamonds of the crown, to pledge his own patrimonial eſtates and property, for their ſupport [13]. Without the pecuniary aſſiſtance of Ferdinand, great duke of Tuſcany, and of the canton of Bern, the troops could neither have been ſubſiſted, nor induced to march into France. The guards themſelves were left unpaid;

Army, unpaid;

and the guards.

[11] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 171.
[12] Letters 71 and 72, in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 508—510. Lettres de Foix, p. 258.
[13] De Thou, vol. x. p. 647.

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paid; and the archers who protected the perſon of Henry at Blois, applied to the duke of Guiſe, on the morning of his aſſaſſination, imploring him to intereſt himſelf in their behalf, as they muſt otherwiſe be neceſſitated to ſell their horſes, and return to their reſpective houſes [14]. Similar diſtreſs had manifeſted itſelf, in the houſehold and troops of the duke of Anjou. In 1582, the unfortunate ſoldiers who had followed that prince's fortune into Flanders, were abandoned to ſuch penury, as to ſolicit alms for their ſubſiſtence [15].

Inſtitution of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

In the midſt of theſe accumulated and humiliating extremities, Henry the Third, whoſe paſſion for expence and ceremonies could not be controlled by any reflexions on his ſituation, inſtituted the order of knighthood of the Holy Ghoſt. It was deſigned to replace that of St. Michael, created by Louis the Eleventh, and which had been proſtituted during the civil wars, in a manner that rendered it contemptible [16]. The inſtitutions of chivalry may be ſaid to have expired, in a great meaſure, with Henry the Second. He was the laſt French monarch who received from the hands of a ſubject, the military honor of knighthood. Marſhal Biez conferred it on him; as the chevalier Bayard had done upon Francis the First, before the battle of Marignan [17]. We may judge how low the order of St. Michael was ſunk in the general eſtimation, by the terms in which it is mentioned by the Viſcount de Tavannes. "I have always diſdained it," ſays he, "and repeatedly "declined to accept it. In my own company, I have often had "three knights of the order; and in my father, marſhal Tavannes' "coffers, I found half a dozen blank patents, to be given to whom-"ſoever I ſhould pleaſe [18]." Many perſons, after having received it, laid it by, and concealed the honor. "Above a hundred gen-"tlemen," ſays La Noue, "finding the expence and ſtile of living

State of the order of St. Michael.

Its degradation.

[14] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 106.
[15] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 645.
[16] Ibid. p. 73.
[17] Brantome, Les Duels, p. 304.
[18] Tavannes, p. 179.

"inſepa-

" inſeparable from the diſtinction, not only inconvenient, but, ruinous, " have choſen to lock up the inſignia of ſo pernicious a dignity [19]." It was diſtributed to ſuch numbers, as to be denominated in deriſion, " Le Collier a toutes Bêtes [20]."

Motives for the creation of the order of the Holy Ghoſt.

Conſcious of this degradation, Henry the Third inſtituted the order of the Holy Ghoſt, on the laſt day of December, 1578. It was compoſed of only one hundred knights, at its commencement; and the king meant to have conferred on each of them four hundred crowns annual penſion, taken from the revenues of the richeſt abbeys of his dominions. But, as the Papal conſent was requiſite, in order to make ſo material an invaſion of the eccleſiaſtical property; and as the clergy oppoſed it at Rome, the intention remained incomplete [21]. Another object, propoſed by its founder, was to attach the members of the new order, more ſtrictly to himſelf; and to form, by its means, a counterpoiſe to the ſtrength of the adherents of the League. But, he ſoon diſcovered how frail was the obligation of oaths, when counteracted by ambition. The order of the Holy Ghoſt was not long confined to the original number of a hundred. It was conferred indiſcriminately, and incurred the ſame reproaches and contempt, which had been laviſhed on that of St. Michael [22].

Its proſtitution.

Multiplication of offices and dignities.

A ſimilar increaſe and proſtitution of all the dignities, or honors of the crown, characteriſed the reign of Henry the Third. Gentlemen of the bed-chamber, eſquires, and colonels, were augmented in a proportion with the other attendants of the court [23]. " Mon" ſieur d'Eſſe," ſays Brantome, " was made for his ſervices in de" fending Landrecy againſt the emperor, a gentleman of the bed" chamber to Henry the Second, which was then a great and ho" norable employment. They ſerved only ſix months, and received

[19] La Noue, p. 169.
[20] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 103. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 356.
[21] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 73 and 74. Tavannes, ibid.
[22] Brant. Les Duels, p. 290.
[23] La Noue, p. 169.

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"twelve hundred livres, or about fifty pounds, of salary [24]." Under his sons, the title was multiplied, and the appointments were withheld.

Household of the duke of Anjou.

The establishment of the duke of Anjou's household, in 1576, of which a most accurate account is preserved in the duke of Nevers' Memoirs, seems to have been more splendid and expensive, if the comparative value of money be considered, than that of any prince of the family of Bourbon, before the late revolution of 1789. The aggregate amount of the appointments to all the officers and attendants, is no less than two hundred and sixty-three thousand, seven hundred and ten livres, annually [25]. It is difficult to estimate the relative value of that sum, at the distance of more than two centuries, in English money; but, perhaps, we shall not rate it too high, when we suppose that it was, in fact, equal to ninety thousand pounds sterling, at this time. It is extremely curious, and conveys a high idea of the magnificence of princes in that age, to survey the number of offices, and the salaries respectively annexed to each. Much of the genius and temper of the times, may be traced, or discovered in them. The duke had no less than one hundred and six chamberlains, at six hundred livres, or about twenty-five pounds each; besides one hundred and forty-eight gentlemen of the bed-chamber, whose salaries varied, from two hundred, to five hundred livres. There are fifteen almoners, seven chaplains, as many clerks of the chapel, and one preacher. Their appointments, in general, do not exceed two, to three hundred livres; and some are as low as a hundred sous, or fifty pence. To the office of superintendant of the household, four thousand livres, or, near a hundred and eighty pounds, are annexed. The duke has sixteen physicians, whose salaries gradually diminish, from six hundred, down to ten livres. The surgeons are eleven in number, and their appointments are exactly similar, being, each, a hundred and eighty livres. There is only one apothecary, with four hundred livres salary. He has forty-six valets de chambre, and forty-one

[24] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 180.

[25] About eleven thousand pounds.

valets

valets of the wardrobe, whoſe ſalaries are, in general, about two hundred livres. The firſt valet has eight hundred. It is amuſing to ſee, that he has five barbers, who receive the ſame pay as the ſurgeons, except the firſt, who is termed barber in ordinary, and has three hundred livres. Paré, in all his writings, ſeems to conſider phyſicians, ſurgeons, and barbers, as exerciſing different branches of the ſame profeſſion of healing. He couples them together, and regards them as diſciples, or followers of one common maſter, Eſculapius [25]. There are among the inferior officers, four tapeſtry hangers, and two helpers: clockmakers, embroiderers, and mercers. The council is very numerous; but, in general, the office ſeems to have been little more than honorary and titular: the emolument is ſmall. To the chancellor, four thouſand livres. There are one hundred and eleven ſecretaries; and the laſt name in the liſt, is the duke's nurſe, with a ſalary of about eighteen pounds [26].

However ſplendid this eſtabliſhment appears on paper, it was far otherwiſe in reality. The duke, in his laſt will, dated the 8th of June, 1584, at Chateau Thierry in Champagne, owns with concern and expreſſions of the deepeſt diſtreſs, that the greater part of his officers and ſervants were unpaid. He pathetically and earneſtly recommends them to the king, his brother's pity, or bounty; and declares, that he is, beſides, indebted to various individuals, not leſs than one hundred and fifty thouſand crowns [27].

Creation of a colonel-general of the infantry.

A creation which excited univerſal clamour, and which expoſed to general cenſure, the unbounded partiality of Henry the Third towards Epernon, was the office of colonel-general of France. Henry, unable to induce the duke of Guiſe to lay down or to ſell, on any conditions, his poſt of lord-ſteward of the houſehold, erected a new charge for his favorite. The employment of colonel-general of the infantry, was declared to be henceforward, an office, not of the king,

[25] Œuvres de Paré, p. 568.

[26] Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p 577—599.

[27] Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 601—603.

but,

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but, of the crown of France. Prerogatives, little ſhort of royal, were annexed to it: the power of filling up, and of naming to all vacant commiſſions in the infantry, without reſerve, was added to the right of judging definitively, all cauſes which reſpected the life or honor of the troops, before a tribunal, compoſed of his own officers, in which he preſided [28]. It may be juſtly queſtioned, whether powers ſo vaſt were ever entruſted to any ſubject; and they degraded the ſovereign who conferred them, in the ſame proportion that they elevated the object of his favor. In 1586, the poſt of grand-maſter of the ceremonies, unknown before that period, was inſtituted by the ſame prince [29]. About two years earlier, he had the weakneſs, in conſequence of a converſation which he had with the Engliſh embaſſadreſs at Paris, to iſſue a regulation reſpecting the ceremonial of the court. The forms, obſerved in approaching, and ſerving Elizabeth, queen of England, and her predeceſſors, in the ſixteenth century, were more pompous and befitting an arbitrary monarch, than thoſe uſed in France. Henry, anxious to imitate, or exceed the Engliſh princeſs, in exacting marks of ſubmiſſion from his courtiers and miniſters, publiſhed an injunction, ſpecifying in the moſt minute detail, the hours, dreſs, and formalities, indiſpenſable for all who wiſhed to obtain audience, or, to tranſact buſineſs [30]. They were received with diſdain, by the nation; and only ſerved to render more contemptible a ſovereign, who, while he was occupied with empty ceremonies, had ſquandered the revenues, diminiſhed the power, and degraded the majeſty of the throne. At the cloſe of the reign of Francis the Firſt, there were no peers in the kingdom, except the princes of the royal blood, and the collateral deſcendants of ſome ſovereign houſes, who were ſettled in France. The titles of duke, count, and marquis, were only ſimple gradations and ranks of nobility. The firſt ſubject ever raiſed to the peerage, was the conſtable Montmorenci, by Henry the

Ceremonial of the court.

Creation of peers.

[28] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 100—102. De Thou, vol. ix. p. 202.

[29] L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.

[30] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 202 and 203.

Second.

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Second. Under Charles the Ninth, it became more common; and his brother, when he elevated to that dignity, his two minions, Joyeuſe and Epernon, gave them precedence above every other gentleman, though of prior creation [31].

Conſtruction, and mode of building.

With Francis the Firſt, magnificence and convenience in the ſtyle of conſtructing houſes of every deſcription, began to be known among the French. The caſtles of Pleſſiz les Tours, Amboiſe, and Blois, in which reſided principally his immediate predeceſſors, were inſulated, and almoſt inacceſſible faſtneſſes, overhanging the Loire, and more calculated for defence againſt enemies, than becoming the majeſty of a great monarch. Chambord and Fontainbleau were the firſt palaces, properly ſo denominated, that Europe had beheld beyond the Alps, ſince the deſtruction of the Roman empire [32]. Neither ſtrength, nor ſafety, conſtituted their characteriſtic: they retained, indeed, the moat, and the caſtellated appearance, more in compliance with the eſtabliſhed mode, than from any other cauſe. Pavillions, groves, ſtatues, and all the ornaments of a ſoftened and cultivated taſte, were to be found in the reſidence of Francis. The example ſpread with rapidity, among the nobility. Ecouen, and Chantilly, conſtructed by the conſtable Montmorenci, were palaces of pleaſure, and not fortreſſes, though they ſtill preſented a frowning, and embattled mien. The antient dungeons and turrets, in which the gentlemen and barons had immured themſelves for ſo many ages, began to be re-edified on principles of a more ſplendid, or convenient architecture [33]. We may judge, from the deſcription of Meudon, and of St. Maur des Foſſés, (the villas of the cardinals of Lorrain, and of du Bellai,) which are to be found in the epiſtles of l'Hopital, how great a progreſs the art of embelliſhing a ſeat, had already made, before 1550. Plantations, grottos, terraces, and gardens, adorned with antique buſts and ſtatues from Rome, were to be found in the voluptu-

Improvements, introduced by Francis the Firſt.

Elegance of palaces.

[31] Memoire au Depôt de Bethune, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 94.

[32] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 277—279.

[33] La Noue, p. 164—167.

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Caſtles of the nobility.

ous retreats of thoſe prelates [34]. It is not, however, by any means, to be underſtood, that the nobility in general, reſembled them; or that caſtles, in the moſt literal acceptation of the term, ceaſed to be maintained and inhabited by the gentry. For a long time ſubſequent to the period under our examination, the draw-bridges were regularly raiſed every evening, and only lowered in the morning, to receive the neceſſary ſupplies of proviſions, brought by the peaſants for ſale. It was requiſite to beſiege a refractory, or rebellious gentleman, who from the battlements of his caſtle, bid defiance to the ſovereign himſelf, and often maintained an obſtinate conflict againſt the forces of the crown [35]. Henry the Third was ſo convinced of the magnitude of the evil, and ſo deſirous of ſtopping, or controlling its further progreſs, that, in 1579, he expreſsly enjoined the commiſſioners, who were ſent to enquire into abuſes, throughout the provinces, to render it an object of their peculiar attention. "You will make diligent "ſearch," ſays he, "after thoſe who have fortified, or may hereafter "fortify, their houſes with ditches, towers, baſtions, or other works, "without having obtained our permiſſion, or, that of our predeceſſors [36]." How numerous were theſe caſtles, and embattled, or caſtellated houſes, we may judge, when we find, that in 1588, the duke of Nevers, who commanded the royal forces, made himſelf maſter of thirty-ſix, only in Lower Poitou, and within the ſpace of a few weeks [37]. They were the receptacles and aſylums of petty deſpots, who inſulted the crown, and who plundered the miſerable peaſants of the neighbouring country.

Dreſs.

Splendor of it.

Dreſs is, perhaps, the ſtrongeſt and moſt intereſting feature, by which national manners are characteriſed. It was carried, like every other article of expence or taſte, to a pitch of almoſt unlimited extravagance, under Henry the Third. The rapidity and fluctuation of

[34] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. p. 17—19, and p. 83—85.

[35] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 601.

[36] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 607.

[37] Ibid. p. 875 and 877.

faſhion,

faſhion, kept pace with the coſtlineſs of the materials. Such was the general demand for gold and ſilver ſtuffs, or brocades, that the effect was ſenſibly felt, by the diminution of the quantity of ſpecie throughout the kingdom[38]. In 1571, at the entertainment of Nogent, in honor of the ducheſs of Bouillon, the king, Charles the Ninth, his two brothers, and the duke of Lorrain, were all dreſſed in the ſame manner. Their habits were of ſilver ſtuff, with an embroidery of pearls, and edged with gold[39]. "Formerly," ſays la Noue, "it was "uſual to wear the ſame dreſs, for a conſiderable time; but, at "preſent, we may pronounce, that, among the courtiers, their or- "dinary duration does not exceed three months, for a common "ſuit; for a more expenſive one, ſix months: and among the other "nobility, ſomewhat longer[40]." "Such has been the depravity of "the age," adds he in another place, "that our pages and lacqueys "have been habited in ſilver ſtuffs[41]." All diſtinctive marks, by which the different orders of ſociety might be diſtinguiſhed, ſeem, in a great meaſure, to have been broken down under Henry the Third. "A cobler," ſays la Noue, "who has followed arms for a couple of "years, will wear a gilt ſword, which our anceſtors would ſcruple "to have done, unleſs they had received the honor of knighthood: "he will put on ſilk ſtockings; a piece of elegance which Henry "the Second never knew during his whole life[42]." It is hardly poſſible to mark the progreſs of luxury, in more expreſſive terms. At the nuptials of Joyeuſe, in 1581, when the feſtivities and entertainments laſted ſeventeen days, and at which the dreſſes were expenſive and ſplendid beyond deſcription; all the noblemen and ladies who were invited, changed their dreſs every day, by the king's expreſs command[43].

Rapidity of faſhion.

Progreſs of luxury.

[38] L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.

[39] Manuſc. de Bethune, in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 81.

[40] La Noue, p. 163.

[41] La Noue, p. 162.

[42] Ibid. p. 194.

[43] L'Etoile, p. 45.

The

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The hat, and turban.

The hat, decorated with feathers, and precious ſtones, worn by Francis the Firſt, was converted into a bonnet, or cap, by Henry the Second, and his two ſucceſſors. Henry the Third ſubſtituted in its place, the Italian "toque," or turban; not only as a more effeminate ornament, but, in the view of more effectually concealing his want of hair[44]. It was compoſed of velvet, adorned with jewels, and faſtened or bound over one ear, leaving the other expoſed, in which was hung a pearl, or diamond[45]. When Sully was ſent by the king of Navarre, in 1587, to treat with that infatuated and diſſolute prince, he was preſented by Villeroy to him, at St. Maur, near Paris.

Dreſs of Henry the Third,

"I found him," ſays Sully, "in his cloſet, a ſword by his ſide, a "ſhort cloak on his ſhoulders, his little turban on his head; and "about his neck, in form of a ſcarf, was hung a baſket, ſuch as the "venders of cheeſe uſe, in which there were two, or three little dogs, "not larger than my fiſt[46]." It may be curious to oppoſe to this portrait of Henry the Third, the deſcription left us by a writer of equal veracity, of the king of Navarre, as he appeared at the memorable interview of Pleſſiz les Tours, in April, 1589. It ſtands ſingularly contraſted with the preceding picture. "He paſſed the river Loire," ſays Cayet, "at the head of his guards. Of the whole troop, not "one, except himſelf, had either a cloak, or a plume. All wore white "ſcarfs. The king was clothed like a ſoldier; his doublet, worn "away over the ſhoulders, and on the ſides, with the perpetual uſe "of a cuiraſs. His looſe breeches were of fillamot velvet; his cloak, "ſcarlet. He had on a grey hat, ornamented with a large white "plume, and a very handſome medal[47]."

and of the king of Navarre.

Ruffs.

During the reigns of Francis the Second and Charles the Ninth, ruffs, curiouſly plaited, were univerſally faſhionable. Every gentleman wore them; and the men of dreſs took great pains, and paſſed

[44] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 272.
[45] L'Art. de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.
[46] Sully, vol. i. p. 48.
[47] Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 185.

much

much time, in adjuſting them with elegance. "After the action "near Perigueux, in 1568, where the Hugonots were defeated," ſays Brantome, "the body of their leader, Pierregourde, was diſcovered: "he had on a clean, white ſhirt; but, above all, a very handſome "ruff, moſt delicately crimped and plaited, as they were then "worn[48]." Soon after his acceſſion, in 1575, Henry the Third quitted the mode, of which he had previouſly been extravagantly fond; and adopted the little Italian bands, or collars, turned down on the neck[49]. How general was the uſe of ear-rings among the men, we may collect from d'Aubigné; who ſays, that when the Hugonots, in 1568, made a collection for paying the German auxiliary army, the pages and lacqueys tore their pendants out of their ears, in their anxiety to contribute towards the general ſupply[50]. Henry the Third uſually wore ear-rings; and among the many marks of indecent and unmanly fondneſs, with which he bewailed the death of Quelus, one of his minions, killed in a duel; he took out of that favourite's ears, the pendants, which he had previouſly fixed in them with his own hands[51].

Bands.

Ear-rings.

Gold chains were rather an honorary mark of diſtinction, than an ordinary appendage of dreſs. Sovereigns, and great perſonages, often conferred them for eminent ſervices, or preſented them to embaſſadors and foreign miniſters. It was accounted a diſplay of magnificence in the famous conſtable of Bourbon, which excited the envy of Francis the Firſt; that, at the ceremony of his ſon's baptiſm, to which the king was invited, he had five hundred gentlemen, his retainers, preſent, every one of whom wore a triple chain of gold round his neck[52]. The Swiſs deputies, twenty-ſix in number, who came to Paris in 1583, to renew the treaty with the crown of France, received from Henry the Third, before their departure, each a gold collar, valued at two hundred and fifty

Gold chains.

[48] Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 194.
[49] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 59.
[50] D'Aub. Hiſt. Gen. vol. i. p. 228.
[51] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 92. Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 171.
[52] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Etran. p. 245.

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crowns [53]. In 1568, Louis, prince of Condé, charmed with the valor of Schomberg, who had attacked and diſlodged ſome of the Italian ſoldiery in the ſervice of Charles the Ninth; and unable otherwiſe to expreſs his ſenſe of the courage diſplayed in the enterprize, put round the neck of Schomberg, at the head of the army, a gold chain worth a hundred crowns [54]. That ſo honorable a teſtimony of merit, or mark of eminence, was ſometimes proſtituted and degraded by conferring it on improper ſubjects, is evident. We find Henry the Second, at the peace of Cateau, in 1559, preſenting to the buffoon of Philip the Second, a chain of gold of conſiderable value [55].

Honorary marks.

In a court ſo voluptuous, as that of Catherine of Medecis, where pleaſure was uſually rendered the veil or vehicle of policy, it may be naturally ſuppoſed, that all the arts of luxury and elegance had made a progreſs not leſs univerſal, among the female ſex, than in the other. Marriage portions, before the extinction of the family of Valois, were already increaſed; among the opulent part of the inhabitants of Paris, to ſuch a point, that a young woman was not eſteemed an object of intereſted attention, unleſs ſhe poſſeſſed at leaſt from four, to five hundred pounds ſterling in ready money, and full twenty pounds of annual rent. This fact would appear incredible, or, at leaſt, exaggerated, if it was not aſſerted as notorious and incontrovertible, by a contemporary author of credit [56]. We may trace in Brantome, who had paſſed his life in the court of the three laſt princes of Valois, the gradual refinement, expence, and profuſion of ornament, by which the ladies were diſtinguiſhed. Margaret, queen of Navarre, a princeſs eminent for the beauty of her perſon, as much as for the depravity and libertiniſm of her manners, influenced greatly by her example, the dreſs and modes of the period. We find her attired or deco-

Arts of luxury.

Female ornaments.

[53] Buſbeq. letter 12, p. 74.

[54] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 228 and 229.

[55] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 293.

[56] Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 198, 199.

rated

rated with almoſt all the attributes and accompaniments of modern coquetry. Falſe hair, maſks, paint, both red and white; fans, black velvet ſhoes, white ſlippers pointed at the toe, hair powder, feathers, crape, white ſilk ſtockings, ear-rings, pearls, tooth powder, and a variety of ſubſervient articles, compoſing her toilet, leave us no room to doubt of the magnificence of her appearance [57]. Many of theſe had been recently introduced into France, from Venice and other cities of Italy. As early as 1574, we find the earl of Leiceſter, who well knew all the foibles and weakneſſes of his royal miſtreſs, diſpatching a gentleman of his houſehold to Paris, to bring over falſe hair and edgings of the neweſt faſhion, for Elizabeth [58]. That capital began already to be regarded as the arbitreſs of taſte and mode. Modes.

Maſks became univerſal among the ladies of every rank, under the reign of Charles the Ninth: they were particularly worn in travelling, in order to prevent the injuries of the air and ſun [59]. Margaret of Valois, on her two journeys to Spa, and to Nerac, performed in 1577, and 1583, is conſtantly maſqued [60]. When Henry, duke of Guiſe, arrived at Paris in 1588, a young lady, ſeated in a ſhop, in one of the principal ſtreets through which he paſſed, attended by crowds of people; lowering her maſque, ſaid to him, "Good prince, ſince thou art "here, we are all ſaved [61]." Sattin was principally uſed in the dreſſes of perſons of quality of both ſexes; or, ſtill more frequently, velvet. Charles the Ninth, his brothers, and the king of Navarre, were all habited, at the nuptials of Margaret of Valois, in 1572, in uniforms of pale yellow ſattin, covered with embroidery in relief, enriched with pearls and precious ſtones [62]. The enormous expence Maſks. Sattins.

[57] Œuvres de St. Gelais, p. 108. Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 380—382, and 396—399; and vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 131, and p. 159. Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 236, and 243, and 284. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 407. Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. viii. liv. i. p. 10, 11. Œuvres de Paré, p. 739—741.

[58] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 407.

[59] Vie de Margue: de Val. p. 236, and p. 343.

[60] Mem. de Margue: p. 44, and p. 129.

[61] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 244.

[62] Vie de Marg. p. 85.

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of female dreſſes in that age, may be gueſſed at, when the queen of Navarre informs us, that ſhe preſented the counteſs of Lalain, at Mons in Hainault, with one of her gowns. "It was," ſays ſhe, "of black ſattin, covered with embroidery; which had coſt from "four to five hundred crowns [63]." A ſum, almoſt incredible, if we conſider the relative value of money; and much exceeding the moſt coſtly gown, worn by queens, or princeſſes, in the preſent time.

Female dreſs.

The petticoat was made very long, ſo as to conceal the feet entirely in walking; but, as a ſort of compenſation for this mark of modeſty and baſhfulneſs, the ladies diſplayed their necks in an immoderate degree. To Margaret of Valois, was, likewiſe, due the introduction of the mode; and ſhe continued to expoſe that part of her perſon, at a period of life when it was no longer calculated to excite admiration, in defiance of the admonitions and reprehenſions, levelled at her from the pulpit [64]. It excites entertainment, to know, that inventions for increaſing the ſize of the female figure behind, as well as for augmenting it before; and both of which have been renewed in the preſent age; were common under the laſt princes of Valois. As early as 1563, treatiſes were written, and ſatires compoſed, on the "Baſquines," and "Vertugalles;" the two articles of dreſs, deſtined to the above-mentioned purpoſes. They were, not without reaſon, conſidered as being ſubſervient to, and productive of great depravity of manners; particularly, from the concealment which they afforded to pregnancy. In 1579, under Henry the Third, the uſe of them was ſo general, that they were commonly called by the name of the part, which they covered, or protected. Ladies, before they went out, were accuſtomed, ſays a contemporary writer, to call to their maid-ſervant, "Apportez moi "mon cul [65]."

63 Vie de Marg. p. 244. Mem. de Marg. p. 136.

64 Vie de Marg. p. 401.

65 Biblioth. Exotica, p. 207. H. Etienne, Dialogues, p. 202, 203. Satyre Menip. vol. ii. p. 387, 388.

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With a view to increaſe their height, ſhort women uſed a ſort of pattins, compoſed of cork, and which, if we may judge by Brantome's account, were equally cumbrous and deſtitute of grace. However extraordinary it appears, he repeatedly aſſerts, that theſe pattins raiſed the perſon who wore them, near twelve inches from the ground [66]. We feel no little ſurprize, and ſome degree of ridicule, at reading in ſo grave an author, as Ambroſe Paré, at leaſt twenty different receipts, or preſcriptions, for making white paint, and rouge. The title of the chapter, in which he diſcloſes, and details the modes of painting the female face, without injury to the health, is denominated, " Des Fards, pour de- " corer et embellir la Face des Femmes [67]." He divides them into diſtinct ſpecies, applicable to various purpoſes; and the fineſt lady of the preſent age, might, probably, find ſome valuable hints, or make ſome important acceſſion to her knowledge on this delicate ſubject, by conſulting Paré, who wrote more than two centuries ago.

Pattins.

Mourning began already to be rendered ſuſceptible of ornament and elegance, under Henry the Third. Widows never appeared in any dreſs, except white or black. Their petticoats and ſtockings were ſcrupulouſly confined to grey, violet, and blue. Precious ſtones were only worn by them on their fingers, and on their girdles; but, they might, without violation of propriety, ſubſtitute pearls on the neck and arms [68]. Females of diſtinction were accuſtomed to wear pendants in their ears, made in the ſhape of human ſkulls. We find a ſonnet of Deſportes, addreſſed to Mademoiſelle de Chateauneuf, the celebrated miſtreſs of Henry the Third, on her appearing with theſe funereal ornaments [69]. Small ebony, or ivory ſkulls, ſtrung as a chaplet, and hanging at their waiſts, were likewiſe commonly worn

Mourning.

[66] Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 381, and p. 396—399.

[67] Œuvres de Paré, p. 739.

[68] Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 131 and 132.

[69] Œuvres de Deſportes, p. 430.

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by ladies, not only, as it ſeems, for the loſs of their huſbands, but, for the death of their lovers[70]. The mourning of the kings of France, was always violet. In 1584, contrary to received cuſtom, Henry the Third put on black, to expreſs his concern for the deceaſe of his brother, the duke of Anjou[71]: but, he only appeared in violet, when he accompanied the funeral proceſſion of his mother, Catherine, four years afterwards[72]. It is a circumſtance not unworthy of attention, as it characterizes the age, that green was regarded as the colour of mourning for fools, or lunatics. No ſooner was the intelligence of Henry the Third's death, in conſequence of the wound which he had received from Clement, divulged at Paris, on the ſecond of Auguſt, 1589, than the people univerſally put on green, in deriſion. The ducheſs of Montpenſier diſtributed ſcarfs of the ſame colour, to all the principal adherents of the League[73].

Royal mourning.

Funerals were commonly ſolemnized with great magnificence. We find Elizabeth, queen of England, though a Proteſtant, performing a ſervice for Charles the Ninth, with the utmoſt pomp, in the cathedral of St. Paul, at London, in 1574. All the great nobility attended: the banner of France was diſplayed, and the biſhop of Hereford made the funeral oration. It is to be preſumed, that he took care to omit any mention of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew[74].

Funerals.

The luxury of the table kept pace with the elegance of dreſs, if it did not even exceed it, during the period before us; and it is highly probable, that the cookery of France was much more delicate than that of England, and the northern nations. We find mention made in Brantome, of many culinary articles, as common, which were certainly unknown among the Engliſh, under Elizabeth. The moſt exquiſite ſauces, meats, and vegetables, ſeem to have been ſerved at the tables of the great, in the utmoſt profuſion. Sallads, artichokes, aſparagus, morelles, truffles,

Luxury of the table.

Vegetables.

[70] Brant. vol. i. p. 148.
[71] Buſbequius, letter 38, p. 203.
[72] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 124.
[73] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 287.
[74] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 66 and 67.

and

and many other delicacies, continually occur[75]. The chancellor, l'Hopital, when enumerating the productions of his farm and garden, at Vignai near Eſtampes, includes among them, beans, peas, and turnips[76]. Orange trees had been brought from the Levant, and were ſucceſsfully cultivated by the conſtable of Bourbon, in his gardens at Moulins, before 1524[77]. The entertainments, and the deſerts, given by the "vidame" of Chartres, to Edward the Sixth, and his court, when he was ſent over as embaſſador from Henry the Second, in 1551, were far more ſplendid and coſtly, than had ever been ſeen before in London[78]. On the 26th of January, 1580, cardinal Birague received Henry the Third, his queen and mother, attended by a great train of noblemen and ladies, in the gallery of his houſe at Paris. A collation was there ſerved, upon two long tables, conſiſting of between eleven and twelve hundred diſhes, compoſed of confectionary, and dried ſweetmeats of various kinds, conſtructed in the form of caſtles, pyramids, and other elegant figures[79]. The original eſtimate of the ſum, requiſite for maintaining the table of the duke of Anjou, as commander in chief of the royal forces before Rochelle, in 1573, was above two thouſand pounds a-month. Marſhal Tavannes reduced it to about four hundred[80]. Even the latter allowance muſt be conſidered as very ample. Ronſard, enumerating the fruits common at the tables of the opulent, ſpeaks of peaches, mulberries, apricots, pears, quinces, raſberries, cherries, and ſtrawberries[81]. Few of theſe delicacies were known, or produced among the Engliſh, before the reign of James the Firſt: a period later by near half a century. Banquets.

We may ſee in Buſbequius, the conſumption of Don Antonio, titular king of Portugal, when reſiding at Rüel, not far from Paris, in 1583. "He conſumes," ſays that author, "every day, the fourth Style and expence of tables.

[75] Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 268—270.
[76] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Epitres, p. 109.
[77] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 282.
[78] Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 341.
[79] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 112.
[80] Tavannes, p. 448.
[81] Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. viii. p. 58.

"part

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" part of an ox, two ſheep, and a hundred and fifty loaves." It is to be obſerved, that Antonio was then ſinking faſt into poverty and oblivion [82]. The Swiſs embaſſadors, who came to ratify the treaty between the Helvetic Union and Henry the Third, received daily from the corporation of Paris, thirteen Mentz ham paſties, thirty quarts of red and white wine, and forty wax torches [83]. The uſual hour of ſitting down to dinner, was eleven o'clock, under Charles the Ninth. Catherine of Medecis, in a long letter which ſhe addreſſed to that prince in 1563, and which forcibly diſplays the enlargement of her mind, as well as her knowledge of the arts of reigning; ſtrongly exhorts her ſon never to dine at a later hour [84]. It is a circumſtance worthy of remark, that Francis of Montmorenci, eldeſt ſon of the conſtable, when taken priſoner, and confined at *Liſle* in 1557, writes to his father, to inform him, that " his daily expences amounted to " three half crowns a-day, as every article of life coſt at leaſt double " the price paid for them in France [85]." The chancellor, l'Hopital alone, appears to have adhered to the primitive ſimplicity of earlier times, in the article of his table. Brantome, who had dined with him, expreſsly ſays, that only boiled meat was ſerved at it, according to his regular cuſtom [86]. That great magiſtrate, who emulated the poetic fame of Horace, equally imitated the frugality of the Roman poet. It was always cuſtomary to preſent water to the gueſts, to waſh their hands, before they ſat down to table, and again at their riſing [87].

Hours.

Simplicity of l'Hopital.

Furniture.

Magnificence in furniture may be ſaid to have been totally unknown among the French, before the reign of Henry the Second. Marſhal St. André, a voluptuous and diſſolute nobleman, who acquired an immenſe property from the favor of that monarch, gave the firſt example of rich furniture, at his caſtle of Valeri. It was ſaid to exceed in beauty, any thing to be found in the royal palaces.

[82] Buſbeq. letter 20, p. 122.

[83] L'Etoile, p. 61.

[84] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 451.

[85] Depôt de Bethune, N° 8673, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 106.

[86] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 80.

[87] Ibid. p. 183. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 503.

Perſian

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Perſian carpets, wrought with gold; and tapeſtries of exquiſite workmanſhip, were among the ornamental pieces. He was juſtly denominated the Lucullus of France[88]. Francis the Firſt poſſeſſed two ſuits of tapeſtry, regarded as the moſt ſuperb in Europe. Both were of Flemiſh manufacture. One repreſented "the continence "of Scipio," and was, on great feſtivals, uſed for decorating the principal halls of his palace. "It coſt," adds Brantome, "eleven thouſand crowns, at that time: at preſent, I have been "aſſured, it could not be procured for twenty-five thouſand, it be-"ing entirely compoſed of gold and ſilk[89]." The ſecond ſuit was, likewiſe, hiſtorical; but, the ſubject was taken from Scripture, and it was appropriated to the royal chapel. As a proof how much more univerſally commerce had diffuſed wealth and all the arts of luxury, among the Italians of the ſame period; Brantome owns, that in the houſe of a private banker at Genoa, he had ſeen a tapeſtry hanging, repreſenting the exploits of Achilles before Troy, ſcarcely inferior in any reſpect to thoſe of Francis. It was valued by the owner, at fifteen thouſand crowns[90].

Tapeſtries.

Their ſplendor and value.

Margaret of Valois, in her Memoirs, deſcribes the tapeſtries and the furniture, with which Don John of Auſtria fitted up the apartments, occupied by her at Namur, as infinitely more coſtly than any that ſhe had ever beheld in France. The tapeſtry was compoſed of velvet, or ſattin, ornamented with columns, woven in embroidery of gold, and ſilver. A Baſhaw, whoſe ſons Don John had made priſoners at the victory of Lepanto, and whom he had reſtored without ranſom, preſented him with the materials. He cauſed them to be made up at Milan, in which city were found the moſt expert workmen of Europe, in that branch of luxury[91].

It was common to remove the principal tapeſtries of the crown wherever the ſovereign went, and to hang them on the walls of the chief

Commonly removed from one palace to another.

[88] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 307. La Noue, p. 168.

[89] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 271.

[90] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 271 and 272.

[91] Memoires de Marg. p. 112, 113.

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chief apartments. At the preciſe moment of time when the duke of Guiſe was aſſaſſinated at Blois, a workman was occupied in unhooking and taking down the hangings of the room, in order to tranſport them to Clery, near Orleans, to which place the king was about to transfer his reſidence. A piece of the tapeſtry, was, by Henry's command, laid over the dead body [92]. We may judge of the value and ſplendor of the hangings uſed on great occaſions, in the palaces of noblemen of high rank, by the deſcription of that which was put up in the hall of the conſtable Montmorenci's houſe at Paris, when he lay in ſtate after his deceaſe, in 1567. It was of crimſon velvet, bordered with pearls, mixed with embroidery of gold thread. The floor was covered with Turkey carpets; and in the middle was raiſed a bed of ſtate, over which was ſpread a quilt of thirty yards ſquare, compoſed of cloth of gold, edged with ermine, and ſurmounted with a canopy of the ſame coſtly materials. The benches, pillows, and cuſhions, were covered with gold tiſſue or brocade [93].

Hangings.

Luxury, in the caſtles of the great eccleſiaſtics.

That great luxury in furniſhing the caſtles of prelates and biſhops, had diſplayed itſelf, even in provinces very remote from the capital, before the cloſe of Henry the Second's reign; may be clearly inferred from the terms in which l'Hopital mentions the reception and entertainment given to Margaret, ducheſs of Savoy, in 1559, at Rouſillon, in Dauphiné. The manſion belonged to the cardinal of Tournon, who was abſent at Rome; but, the honors were performed by his brother. "Our tables," ſays he, "were ſplendidly ſerved; "and delicious wines were poured into vaſes of gold and ſilver. "Nothing could equal the beauty of the linen, the furniture, and "the number of rich carpets from Sidon and the coaſt of Aſia "Minor [94]."

Want of cleanlineſs.

It is curious to ſee, that, with all their magnificence, the nobility of France in that age, were by no means poſſeſſed of the

[92] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 109.
[93] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 502 and 503.
[94] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Epitres, p. 288.

virtue

virtue of cleanlineſs in their dwellings. La Noue ſeverely reproaches them with this characteriſtic defect. "No ſooner," ſays he, "has "a gentleman conſtructed a houſe, than he muſt of neceſſity, "furniſh it with tapeſtries from Flanders, and beds from Milan." —"But, when we ſee how neatly, and at how ſmall an expence, "the houſes of ſimple citizens and merchants are fitted up, the "nobles ought to be aſhamed to keep their rooms ſo filthy[95]." CHAP. V.

Plate began to be common among the higher orders of ſociety. At the departure of the Engliſh embaſſador from Paris, in 1585, who had brought to Henry the Third the order of the garter; the plate, preſented to him by the king, was eſtimated at five hundred pounds value[96]. One hundred crowns a day had been allowed him during his reſidence in the metropolis, for the ſupport of his houſehold. His ſtay did not exceed three weeks[97]. Plate.

The collation, given by cardinal Birague, to Henry, in 1580, of which mention has already been made, was not ſerved in plate, but, in the Italian porcelain of Faenza, which was exceedingly beautiful. A circumſtance not to be omitted, is, that the greater part of the diſhes, amounting to above eleven hundred in number, were broken in pieces by the pages and lacqueys in attendance[98]. Porcelain.

Under the ſame reign, it appears that the uſe of glaſs at meals, became common. Ronſard, in one of his poetical compoſitions, entitled "Le Verre," laviſhes the warmeſt encomiums on the introduction of an article, at once ſo elegant and ſo clean. He peculiarly praiſes their ſubſtitution in the place of thoſe maſſy goblets of gold and ſilver, which were antecedently in general uſe at the tables of the great[99].

Notwithſtanding the magnificence diſplayed on particular occaſions, by the nobility, and the oſtentatious parade of wealth or grandeur; Want of domeſtic convenience.

[95] La Noue, p. 167 and 168.
[96] Buſbeq. letter 48, p. 235.
[97] Ibid. letters 46 and 48.
[98] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 112 and 113.
[99] Œuvres de Ronſard, 2d Bocage Royal, p. 130—134.

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deur; it is certain, that general comfort or convenience were unknown. Almoſt all thoſe inventions of domeſtic eaſe and enjoyment, ſo familiar in the preſent age, and ſo univerſally diffuſed, did not then exiſt, even in the palaces of princes. Chairs were ſcarcely known; and only coffers, or benches, were to be found in the houſes of the wealthy. We find no better furniture in the queen-mother's chamber, at Bourdeaux, in 1566; or, in the royal apartments of the Louvre, in 1572 [100]. Brantome ſeldom, if ever, mentions any other kind of ſeats, except cheſts [101]. Under Henry the Third, arm chairs were invented; but, their uſe was confined to the court, and almoſt to the ſovereign [102]. In the enumeration of the pieces of furniture, expoſed at the ceremony of the conſtable of Montmorenci's funeral, we find only one chair, covered with velvet, which was that belonging to the deceaſed, and in which he was uſed to ſit at table [103]. So valuable was furniture, that kings themſelves conſtantly removed it from one palace to another, or inhabited apartments almoſt deſtitute of any. In 1584, Catherine of Medecis, finding her ſon, the duke of Anjou, in a hopeleſs ſtate of health, at Chateau Thierry upon the river Marne, ſtripped the caſtle of its moſt coſtly moveables, which ſhe cauſed to be put into boats, and tranſported to Paris by water. She executed this act, which appears to us ſo indecent, on the firſt of June; and the duke expired nine days afterwards [104]. It would, however, ſeem to be evident, from the compariſon of all the accounts left us by contemporary writers, that furniture, in the ſixteenth century, was principally compriſed in the three articles of tapeſtry, beds, and carpets; and it is to be obſerved, that of theſe, none were fabricated by the French themſelves. Milan furniſhed the beds; Flanders, the hangings, long known by the name of Arras; and the carpets were imported from

Chairs.

Mode of ſtripping the houſes of the dying.

Furniture moſtly imported.

[100] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 200. Memoires de Marg. de Valois, p. 59.

[101] Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 273.

[102] Art. de Verif. vol. i. p. 659.

[103] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 103.

[104] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 177.

the

the Levant. We find, that on the deceaſe of great perſonages, the tapeſtries were uſually taken down, as a mark of ſorrow or mourning. In 1589, Henry the Third, to expreſs the depth of his affliction for his mother's loſs, cauſed the walls of all the apartments of ſtate at Blois, to be painted black, ſown with tears [105]. CHAP. V.

Carriages, an eſſential component of modern luxury, were unknown in France at the end of Henry the Second's reign; but, we ſee them mentioned almoſt immediately afterwards. Chriſtina of Denmark, ducheſs of Lorrain, who attended the ceremony of Charles the Ninth's inauguration, in 1561, at Rheims, is one of the firſt perſons ſtated to have been drawn in a coach. Brantome deſcribes the vehicle accurately, as an eye-witneſs. "It was," ſays he, "very manificent, "and entirely covered with black velvet, on account of her widow-"hood. Four white Turkiſh horſes drew it, the moſt beautiful that "could be choſen, and harneſſed all four abreaſt, like a triumphal "chariot. The ducheſs was at one of the doors, habited in a gown "of black velvet; but, her head was ſuperbly dreſſed in white. At "the other door, ſat one of her daughters [106]." It may be a matter of doubt, whether, at that time, Catherine of Medecis herſelf had any coach. Brantome expreſsly aſſerts, that they did not exiſt under her huſband's reign [107]. Before 1573, they were become ſo common, that ſir Francis Walſingham returned from Fontainbleau to Paris, on his way to England, in a chariot of Charles the Ninth, which the king had ordered for him, as a mark of attention to Elizabeth's embaſſador [108]. In the following year, coaches are mentioned as the ordinary conveyance of the queen-mother; and, in 1575, in order to prevent the eſcape of the duke of Alenſon and king of Navarre, they were tranſported in carriages, from Lyons, acroſs France, to Rheims [109]. Carriages. Coaches.

[105] De Thou, vol. x. p. 503.
[106] Brant. vol. ii. Dame. Gal. p. 123.
[107] Ibid. Cap. Etrang. p. 288.
[108] Letter of Catherine of Medecis, dated the 29th April, 1573, in Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 330.
[109] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 400. Sully, vol. i. p. 15.

Nearly

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Chariots. Their encreaſe.

Nearly about the ſame period, Margaret, queen of Navarre, deſcribes her chariot, as being "gilt on the outſide, and within, lined "with a yellow velvet, edged with ſilver [110]." Towards the cloſe of Henry the Third's reign, perſons of eminence, all over the kingdom, travelled in carriages. Chiverny, in 1588, talks of his coach, as a part of his eſtabliſhment [111]. They were become ſo general in the metropolis, before 1589, that, as we learn from a contemporary writer, citizens of rank and conſideration, kept one, or even two coaches, for their own uſe [112]. The firſt preſident of the parliament of Toulouſe, Duranti, was returning in his coach, through the ſtreets of the city, to his houſe, in January, 1589, when he was attacked, and at length murdered, by the populace [113].

Litters.

Litters continued, notwithſtanding, to be long uſed, as the moſt commodious and indulgent mode of conveyance. They were uſually borne by mules [114]. Henry the Third, on his return through Savoy, acroſs the Alps, in 1574, was carried in "a glazed litter;" while Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, proceeded on horſeback, at the head of his troops [115]. Coaches were not only unwieldy, but, rough; and, independant of the ornaments uſed to decorate them, the carts of the preſent age may be pronounced a far more agreeable vehicle.

Deſcription of the queen of Navarre's litter.

When Margaret, queen of Navarre, undertook her celebrated political journey to Spa, in 1577, ſhe preferred a litter; and ſent her attendants in coaches, or chariots: for, ſhe uſes the term indifferently. Her deſcription of the cavalcade, is equally entertaining and curious. "I went," ſays ſhe, "in a litter, conſtructed with pillars, and lined "with ſcarlet Spaniſh velvet, embroidered with gold and ſilk. The "litter was entirely glazed [116]."—"It was followed by thoſe of the "princeſs of la Roche ſur Yonne, and of Madame de Tournon; by "ten young ladies on horſeback, with their governeſſes; and by ſix

[110] Vie de Marg. p. 144. Mem. de Marg. p. 49.
[111] Chiverny, Mem. vol. i. p. 114.
[112] Satyre Menip. vol. iii. p. 199.
[113] De Thou, vol. x. p. 567.
[114] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Franç. p. 224.
[115] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 133.
[116] Mem. de Marg. p. 98.

" coaches, or chariots, in which went the remaining ladies and female " attendants [117]."

Horſes.

There is ſcarcely any circumſtance which excites more aſtoniſhment, than the enormous prices paid for horſes, particularly, for chargers, during the period under our review. They appear to have been chiefly reſerved for war, or for parade. Mules were uſed on ordinary occaſions, even by ſovereigns. Ladies commonly rode a ſmall breed of horſes, called haqueneys [118]. Francis the Firſt had twelve mules, for his own immediate uſe. When the cardinal of Lorrain went to Bruſſels in 1559, to ratify the peace between the crowns of Frain and Spain, he had with him, thirty ſumpter mules, covered with crimſon velvet, on which were embroidered his arms and cardinal's hat, in gold, or ſilver [119]. The joint eſtabliſhment of Charles the Ninth, and Henry the Third, when only dukes of Orleans, and of Angouleme, in their childhood, conſiſted of ſix mules; four little haqueneys for their own mounting; and ſix nags for their eſquires [120]. " I perfectly remember, as a boy," adds Brantome, " that Margaret, ſiſter of Francis the Firſt, that great queen of Na- " varre, had only three ſumpter mules, and ſix for her two litters. " She had, it is true, three or four " chariots" for her females. " At preſent, neither men, nor women, are content with ſo ſmall " a number [121]." Noblemen, general officers, and magiſtrates, when riding out for pleaſure or buſineſs, were mounted upon mules [122]. In 1581, the price of a common one, was, it ſeems, about forty-five crowns [123]. Montaigne had purchaſed three ſhort-tailed nags, a few days before, for a hundred crowns [124]. Brantome ſays, that the price of that breed of horſes had doubled, in his time, having riſen from thirty, to ſixty crowns [125]. But, it is in Montluc and in

Mules.

Progreſs of luxury.

[117] Vie de Marg. p. 201 and 202.
[118] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 112.
[119] Ibid. p. 213.
[120] Ibid. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 234.
[121] Ibid. p. 235.
[122] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 204. Ibid. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 149.
[123] Voyages de Montaigne, vol. iii. p 459.
[124] Ibid. p. 452, 453.
[125] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 319.

Sully,

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Augmentation of the price of horſes.

Sully, that we ſee, with amazement, the ſums given for fine horſes. From a hundred, to a hundred and fifty crowns, are the ſmalleſt, of which they make mention. It is, however, to be remarked, that they always ſpeak of chargers and courſers, uſed in war. Only ſtrong horſes could carry the immenſe weight of a man caſed in complete armor. The animal himſelf was frequently barded, or covered with iron mail, in front. One of that deſcription, Montluc eſtimates at above ſeventy pounds ſterling [126]. Sully aſſures us, that he ſold two horſes; one to the "vidame" of Chartres, for three hundred crowns; and the other, a beautiful creature, of a Spaniſh breed, to the duke of Nemours, for ſix hundred. Such a ſum, allowing for the difference in the value of money, would be eſteemed high, even for a racer of the firſt reputation, in the preſent age [127]. A very conſiderable traffic was carried on between the German empire, and France, in the article of horſes. Men of quality did not, it ſeems, diſdain to become dealers; and we find, that Sully made prodigious profits, by buying up ſmall horſes in Germany, where they were to be procured at low prices; and afterwards ſelling them for large ſums, in Gaſcony. He owns, that he, in a great meaſure, maintained the expence of his houſehold, by this lucrative commerce [128].

Trade in horſes.

Pages.

It was one of the principal modes of providing for youth, to place them as pages in the families of the great. Gentlemen of ſlender fortunes, had recourſe to the protection of the wealthy nobility, to receive their children. Fidelity, obedience, and adherence, were exacted on one ſide: patronage and ſupport were extended on the other. Sovereigns maintained a vaſt number about their perſons, and in their court; who, after a few years, when they attained to a proper age, were incorporated in the cavalry, or infantry. They were divided into diſtinct claſſes, or departments; of the bed-chamber, the great ſtables, the royal hunt, the falconry, and other

[126] Montluc, Commentaries, vol. iv. p. 228—230.

[127] Sully, vol. i. p. 43.

[128] Ibid. p. 41.

branches

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branches of the houſehold. Henry the Second uſually retained above a hundred and twenty pages, of whom he annually diſpatched at leaſt fifty, to the wars [129]. How ſevere was the diſcipline, and how abſolute the power arrogated over them, may be judged, from the entertaining deſcription given us by Brantome. "My father, and "monſieur d'Etrées," ſays he, "had, both, been brought up pages "of the queen, Anne of Bretagne, and they rode upon the mules of "her litter. I have often heard them ſay, that ſhe cauſed them to be "ſeverely whipped, whenever they did not properly guide the mules, "or if they ſtumbled the leaſt in the world. My father rode upon "the foremoſt; and monſieur d'Etrées, upon the ſecond. When "their time was expired, ſhe ſent them both into Italy, to the "army [130]." The correction of the whip, or of the rod, ſo much diſuſed among us in the preſent times, was not, by any means, confined to boys, in the ſixteenth century. Young women of high condition were frequently ſubjected to that humiliating puniſhment. "Catherine "of Medecis," ſays Brantome, "cauſed mademoiſelle de Limeuil, "and two others of her companions, all of them maids of honor, to "be moſt ſeverely flogged, for having written a paſquinade upon the "court [131]." So numerous were the pages, about the palaces of kings, that they compoſed a formidable body; more eſpecially, as they were in the firſt fire of youth, and enthuſiaſtically attached to their reſpective lords. A quarrel having ariſen in the caſtle of Blois, during the convocation of the States, in November, 1588, between the pages of the duke of Montpenſier, and thoſe of the duke of Guiſe, in which a page of the latter was left dead upon the ſpot; the whole court took the alarm. All the nobility, princes, and the king himſelf, having armed themſelves, repaired to the place; and if the duke of Guiſe had ſhewn the ſmalleſt inclination to bring matters to an iſſue, a general carnage would have commenced between the two fac-

Their numbers.

Severity of their treatment.

Danger ariſing from their numbers.

[129] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 43.
[130] Ibid. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 224.
[131] Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 421.

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tions of the Royaliſts and the League. Henry, after ſo ſerious an outrage on the majeſty of the throne, and the reſpect due to the reſidence of the ſovereign, iſſued an order, prohibiting every page, or footman, from preſuming to enter the court of the caſtle with arms, on pain of chaſtiſement with the whip [132].

Reſpect paid by pages, to their maſters.

Such was the reſpect borne by gentlemen towards thoſe under whom they had been brought up as pages, that no length of time, or elevation, however great, could cancel and obliterate the obligation. "Monſieur d'Eſſe," ſays Brantome, "who had been page to Andrew de Vivonne, my grandfather, although he roſe to the higheſt "military and civil dignities, yet, when he came to viſit my grand-"mother, would never permit himſelf to waſh his hands at the ſame "time with her, on ſitting down to table; declaring, that it was im-"poſſible for him to loſe the becoming recollection of his having been "a domeſtic ſervant in her houſe [133]." It is evident, that much of this reverence had been loſt, after the commencement of the civil commotions, which deeply affected and changed the national manners.

Diſſolution of manners, under Charles the Ninth.

In 1563, Catherine of Medecis, writing to her ſon, Charles the Ninth, and exhorting him to follow the examples of his father and grandfather, in the manner of holding, or regulating his court, thus expreſſes herſelf: "Under the two laſt reigns, the archers of "the guard were uſually in the apartments, on the ſtaircaſes, and in "the court-yards, to prevent the pages and lacqueys from gaming, "as they preſume to do at preſent; nay, to hold regular gaming "tables in the caſtle itſelf where you are lodged, with oaths and "blaſphemies: a thing execrable [134]!" La Noue, who diſcuſſes the advantages, derived from the cuſtom of placing the youth, in quality of pages about the great nobility; and who expoſes with energy, the characteriſtic vices inſeparable from that mode

[132] De Thou, vol. x. p. 415—417. Davila, p. 737.

[133] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 183.

[134] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 452.

Conſequences of it.

of education; informs us how relaxed the ſuperintendence was become under Henry the Third. "We have ſeen princes and noble-"men," ſays he, "who received ſuch a number of pages, that they "abandoned all care, not only of their inſtruction, but, even of "their cloathing. Inſtances have been known, of pages, who were "without breeches, and who were left to play at bowls with lacqueys "and ſtable boys[135]." It cannot, however, be queſtioned, that the inſtitution, in itſelf, was a beneficial one; and peculiarly, as a reſource to the inferior gentry, who thus provided for their numerous ſons. It may be conſidered as a nurſery, from which the military ſervice was, likewiſe, furniſhed with continual recruits; and many of the ableſt commanders in the ſixteenth century, had been in the condition of pages. Cheleque, and Klinquebert, two German youths, in that employment, under Francis, duke of Guiſe, and who were, unfortunately, too active in the memorable maſſacre of Vaſſy, in 1562, roſe to a very conſiderable degree of military eminence, as well as to an uncommon ſhare of royal favor. One of them conſtantly carried the duke's fowling piece; and the other, his piſtols[136].

Benefits ariſing from the cuſtom of having pages.

Beſides pages, the great entertained in their ſervice, a prodigious number of domeſtics, or lacqueys, who were commonly armed, and ready, on every occaſion, to eſpouſe the quarrels, or to aid the reſentment of their maſter. We find, that in 1584, Henry the Third, when reforming his houſehold, diſmiſſed at once, near a hundred and thirty valets. They were reduced from a hundred and fifty, to twenty-four[137]. Even Don Antonio, the exiled king of Portugal, kept about ſixty ſervants, after his defeat at the Azores, and his return to France[138]. They were frequently ſelected and retained, more for their courage and ſkill in managing weapons of offence, than from

Lacqueys.

Their numbers.

[135] La Noue, p. 117—119, and p. 124.
[136] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 88.
[137] Buſbeq. letter 3d, p. 181.
[138] Ibid. letter 20, p. 122.

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They were armed.

any other motive. Montluc tells us, that he knew a gentleman, who never took any ſervant into his employ, till he had put a ſword into the man's hand, and aſcertained by actual proof, that he was maſter of the ſcience of fencing. By this means, he drew to him a number of reſolute, and ſkilful guards for his protection, or devoted miniſters of his revenge [139]. The marquis of Meilleraye having killed Livarot, one of the minions of Henry the Third, in a duel, was murdered by the lacquey of his antagoniſt, as he returned from the place of action [140]. How dangerous it was to moleſt them, and how formidable were their numbers, we may collect from many inſtances. The duke of Orleans, youngeſt ſon to Francis the Firſt, having, in a juvenile frolic, attacked the lacqueys, who were in poſſeſſion of the bridge of Amboiſe, at the head of a band of the young nobility, during the night; was received by them in ſo reſolute a manner, that he ran the moſt imminent hazard of his life. Caſtelnau who interpoſed, and received the thruſt made at him, fell dead upon the ſpot [141].

Danger of moleſting them.

Buffoons.

Buffoons, or jeſters, performed the part of no inconſiderable perſonage in the court of ſovereigns, during the period under our conſideration. If we may believe the ſtory related by Brantome, and which bears in it the ſtrong marks of authenticity, they ſometimes were entitled to a more reſpectable appellation, and might rather be denominated monitors. Louis the Eleventh, ſays he, was overheard by his fool, in the act of confeſſing the murder of his brother, the duke of Guienne, and imploring the interpoſition of the virgin, to procure from the Divine Being, his forgiveneſs for the crime. The king was on his knees, before the altar of "our lady of "Clery," when he made a diſcloſure of ſo much conſequence; and paid no attention to the buffoon, as conceiving him too contempt-

Anecdote of Louis the Eleventh.

[139] Montluc, Commentaries, vol. iv. p. 290 and 291.

[140] Brant. Les Duels, p. 110.

[141] Ibid. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 345 and 346.

ible

ible and deſtitute of comprehenſion, either to hear, or to retain the fact. But, the jeſter, who had been in the ſervice of the murdered duke, and who bore an affection to his memory, reproached the king, as he ſat at table, with his guilt, and accuſed him, from his own confeſſion, with having diſpatched his brother. It may be well ſuppoſed, that a prince leſs flagitious than Louis the Eleventh, could not digeſt ſo unexpected a reprimand. The author of it expiated with his life, the imprudence, or honeſty of his conduct; which, probably, in the eſtimation of the courtiers, might paſs for an inconteſtible proof of folly [142]. His ſucceſſors appear to have taken warning by his fate, and to have occupied themſelves rather in amuſing, than in troubling their maſters.

Bruſquet. His riſe, and hiſtory.

The buffoon of Henry the Second, Bruſquet, who attained to ſome celebrity in his profeſſion, ſeems to have been a cunning, rapacious, ſagacious knave, who was allowed to divert the king, in any way, and at the expence of all thoſe who frequented the court. He was made poſt-maſter of Paris, and amaſſed very conſiderable wealth, partly by pilfering, and partly by benefactions, or donations of various kinds. If we may judge of his powers of exciting mirth, from the numerous ſpecimens given us by Brantome, he would not, in the preſent age, have been thought ſufficiently witty, or expert, to have played the part of a Merry Andrew, in a country fair. Yet, he certainly contributed greatly to enliven the drawing-room of Catherine of Medecis [143]. It is, however, to be obſerved, that a thouſand tricks were played with him, as well as by him; and that, provided the king and queen were only amuſed, it was a matter of little conſequence how ſeverely Bruſquet ſuffered. The cardinal of Lorrain, when going on an embaſſy to pope Paul the Fourth, could not diſpenſe with the ſociety of ſo agreeable a companion, whom he, there-

Credit enjoyed by him.

[142] Brantome, vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 30—32.

[143] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 266—286.

fore,

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fore, carried with him to Rome [144]. It is not a little entertaining, to ſee, that at the peace in 1559, between the crowns of France and Spain, the firſt interchange of amity between the two monarchs, is the reciprocal preſent of their reſpective jeſters. But, the Spaniſh fool was a mere "Buffo Magro," ſays Brantome, compared with ours, who preſerved over him a vaſt ſuperiority [145]. Philip the Second relaxed from his Caſtilian gravity, in his treatment of Bruſquet; and Henry the Second, not to be behind-hand in munificence, or politeneſs, loaded the foreign jeſter with preſents [146]. Brantome, after enumerating all the eminent buffoons of five ſucceeding reigns, gives the decided preference to Bruſquet's jeſts; and only laments, that, at laſt, he became ſuſpected of a ſerious attachment to the reformed religion. For this crime, one of the moſt heinous which he could have committed, he loſt his place, was plundered, and driven to take refuge with the ducheſs of Bouillon, where he ſoon after died in obſcurity and indigence [147].

His diſgrace.

Jeſters.

Great perſonages ſeem never to have travelled without at leaſt one jeſter, to diſſipate the melancholy of their own reflexions, or to enliven the converſation. Margaret, daughter of Francis the Firſt, when on her journey into Savoy, in 1559, was allowed two buffoons, to diſperſe her chagrin. The proviſion was not too ample; for, the chief jeſter being ſeized with a fever at Rouane, not far from Lyons, the ſecond was compelled to exert all his talents to divert the princeſs. L'Hopital, who accompanied her, and who has left us a poetic Latin journal of the route from Paris to Nice, which may vie with the fifth ſatire of the firſt book of Horace, deſcribes the nature of the efforts made by Margaret's jeſter. They betray neither extent, nor variety of abilities. "Having covered himſelf," ſays l'Hopital, "with a fox's ſkin, and beſmeared his face with flour, he

Nature of their wit and humour.

[144] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 283.
[145] Ibid. p. 291.
[146] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 292.
[147] Ibid. p. 293 and 294.

"began

" began the ſatire's dance, mimicking at the ſame time the ſilly and " ridiculous movements of the peaſants. Gradually augmenting " his addreſs, he contrived to ſeat himſelf upon a large ſtick, while " he embraced both his thighs. Every one who attempted to imi- " tate him, fell down; and their fall only increaſed the laughter of " the ſpectators [148]." It muſt be owned, that ſuch a diverſion does not convey any very elevated idea of the taſte of the age.

Thony.

Cardinals, and great prelates, had always jeſters in their train. " The conſtable Montmorency," ſays Brantome, " was ſo fond of " Thony, the buffoon, that he uſually had him at dinner, and " placed him on a joint-ſtool near himſelf, treating him like a little " king. If the pages or lacqueys diſpleaſed him, they were " whipped [149]." It appears, that the profeſſion was by no means excluſively limited to men: there were female jeſters; and Brantome cites the repartees of mademoiſelle Sevin, who occupied that employment in the houſehold of the queen of Navarre [150]. When the famous counteſs of Guiche, miſtreſs of the king of Navarre, went to maſs, in 1584, at Nerac, in Gaſcony, d'Aubigné aſſures us, that ſhe was regularly accompanied by a running footman, a buffoon, a Moor, a lacquey, an ape, and a water ſpaniel [151]. We muſt confeſs, that the manners of thoſe times, were very eſſentially different from our own.

Female jeſters.

Watches.

Among the ornaments, or inventions, become common under Henry the Third, may be reckoned watches. The firſt, ever ſeen in France, was found among the ſpoils of the marquis del Guaſto, the Imperial commander, after the battle of Cerizoles, in 1544. It was ſent by the duke of Enghien, to Francis the Firſt, and formed an object of admiration to his courtiers [152]. They were commonly worn, hanging from the neck, in 1588 [153]. The introduction and

[148] Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Epitres, p. 283.
[149] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 126.
[150] Ibid. Dames Gal. p. 181.
[151] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 102.
[152] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Etrang. p. 390.
[153] L'Etoile, p. 108.

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Snuff.

uſe of ſnuff among the French, is, likewiſe, due to this period. John Nicod, a maſter of requeſts, on his return from an embaſſy to Portugal, brought ſome of it to Paris. It was at firſt denominated from him, "La Nicodine;" but, Catherine of Medecis liking the herb, and taking it herſelf, it received the name of "L'Herbe à la "Reine," by which it was long diſtinguiſhed [154].

[154] Lettres du Card. d'Oſſat. vol. i. p. 5, note.

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Paſſion for martial exerciſes.—Tournaments, and combats at the barrier.—Judicial combats.—Relation of that between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye.—Defiances.—Diverſions.—Entertainments.—Sports.—Occupations.—Colours.—Devices.—Rage for gaming.—Theatrical repreſentations.—Falſe coiners.—Retainers.—Spies.—Duels.—Aſſaſſinations.—Murders.—Study and practice of magic.—Demoniacs.—Enchantments.—Aſtrology.—Horoſcopes and calculations of nativity.—Tranſmutation of metals, and alchymy.—Pilgrimages and jubilees.—Roads.—Inns.—Frequency, and ravages of the plague.—Diſtempers.—Review of the characteriſtic vices and virtues of the period.—Concluſion.

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ONE of the ſtrongeſt features which characterized the period under our review, was the paſſion for martial exerciſes. It pervaded every ſpecies of diverſion or amuſement, and rendered them fierce, dangerous, and ſanguinary. The genius and ſpirit of chivalry, however rapidly on their decline, were yet far from being extinct; and the fatal accident, by which Henry the Second loſt his life, though it checked the rage for tournaments, did not produce their ſuppreſſion or abolition. A knowledge of fencing in all its extent, and a perfect acquaintance with the ſcience of offence and defence, was not merely the accompliſhment of a gentleman: it was indiſpenſable for the abſolute preſervation of life and honor. Every weapon had its reſpective maſters, or profeſſors, who excelled in their uſe, or management; and in order to be prepared for occurrences, it was neceſſary to be equally ſkilful with the harquebuſs, the ſword, the dagger, and the lance. Rome, Milan, and Ferrara, ſupplied the moſt expert

Paſſion for martial exerciſes.

Practice of arms.

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expert gladiators, for the inſtruction of the French youth; who uſually paſſed a conſiderable portion of their early life, in acquiring ſuch a degree of dexterity in the practice of arms, as to extricate themſelves with ſucceſs from the frequent quarrels, which aroſe upon the ſlighteſt occaſions [1]. The young men of condition were occupied during whole days, in fencing; and the lower chambers of the Louvre, which were the ſcene of their paſtime, might be regarded as a ſort of ſchool, or academy, for thoſe exerciſes of the body [2]. D'Aubigné deſcribes the court of Nerac, as filled with gentlemen, employed in the ſame diverſion [3].

Running at the ring.

Of the various ſpecies of martial amuſements, frequent under the laſt princes of Valois, the only one which diſplayed the utmoſt vigor and addreſs, without any mixture of perſonal danger, or hazard, was the running at the ring. It was commonly exhibited either during the carnival, or on ſome occaſion of feſtivity; as the perſons were maſked, and diſguiſed by groteſque dreſſes, calculated to heighten the ſingularity of the ſpectacle. Female ornaments and attire were always preferred. "I ſaw," ſays Brantome, "a courſe at the "ring, under Francis the Second, at Amboiſe, where the performers "were the grand prior of Lorrain, and the duke of Nemours, two "of the beſt cavaliers in France. The grand prior was mounted on "a barb, dreſſed very elegantly as a Gipſey woman. On his head, "he wore the large round Gipſey hat; his gown and petticoat were "compoſed of velvet and taffety, made very full. Within his left "arm, he held, inſtead of a little child, a ſmall, female ape, ſwaddled "preciſely like an infant. But, after the fourth courſe, he was "obliged to diſembarraſs himſelf of the animal. The duke of Ne"mours was habited as a tradeſman's wife, with a hat and a gown of "black cloth: at his waiſt was a houſewife's bag, and a large ſilver "chain, to which was faſtened a ring, with above a hundred keys

Groteſque dreſſes worn.

Deſcription of a courſe, at Amboiſe.

[1] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 427.
[2] Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. ii. p. 107.
[3] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 101.

"hanging

" hanging on it. The noiſe made by the multitude of keys, " was very amuſing. Both the performers were maſked: they " made ten courſes; and at the eleventh, the grand prior carried off " the ring[4]." We find Henry the Third engaged in the ſame diverſion at Paris, in 1576, when he wore the dreſs and arms of an Amazon[5]. The king of Navarre excelled in every military, or manly exerciſe; and never, during his whole life, omitted any occaſion of diſplaying his ability and proweſs. He, and the prince of Condé, tilted, and ran at the ring, in honor of d'Aubigné's nuptials, in 1581[6]. Other inſtances.

Tournaments, and combats at the barrier, were diverſions of a much fiercer ſpecies, and accompanied with perſonal danger, notwithſtanding all the precautions uſed to prevent their miſchievous conſequences. We cannot ſufficiently expreſs our amazement at the pertinacity with which not only the French, but, all the European nations, adhered to them, in defiance of cataſtrophes the moſt tragical, frequently repeated. In 1549, Henry the Second publiſhed through Italy, Germany, and Spain, the celebration of a great tournament. He himſelf, with the princes of the blood, were aſſailants, againſt Francis, duke of Guiſe, and others. Marſhal Tavannes was among the number. Every ceremony of chivalry was religiouſly obſerved. Tavannes aſſures us, that he was the only one of the noblemen, maintaining the barrier, who eſcaped unwounded; that the diverſion laſted eight days; and that he ordinarily broke ſixty lances, every day[7]. The death of Henry the Second, an event ſo productive of calamity, and ſo calculated to impreſs with laſting apprehenſion, could not prevent a renewal of the ſame games at Orleans, in the preſence of Francis the Second, only a year afterwards. A youth of the royal blood, Henry of Bourbon, ſon to the prince of La Roche ſur Yonne, was Tournaments. Danger and ſeverity of thoſe amuſements. Examples.

[4] Brantome, vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 399—401.

[5] L'Etoile, p. 19.

[6] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 92. Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 186.

[7] Tavannes, p. 127.

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again killed, at the age of fourteen, by the ſhock which he received from the count of Maulevrier's horſe [8]. Thoſe who only loſt an eye, or received a ſevere wound, might be eſteemed fortunate [9]. In 1571, at the feſtival of Nogent, was held a combat at the barrier, which continued during two nights, and was performed by the light of torches. Henry, duke of Guiſe, maintained the barrier, on the firſt evening, againſt Charles the Ninth, and other aſſailants. The king was wounded in the foot, by his antagoniſt's ſword, which broke, and cauſed a great effuſion of blood. Catherine of Medecis, who had ſeen her huſband periſh in a tournament, had reaſon to be alarmed for the life of her ſon [10]. One of the moſt magnificent exhibitions of this kind, was given before the Louvre, in Auguſt, 1572, in honor of the king of Navarre's nuptials, and only a few days preceding the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew. Charles the Ninth, and his brothers, were habited as amazons: the king of Navarre, together with his attendants, aſſumed the Turkiſh dreſs, and were clothed in long robes of brocade, with turbans on their heads. The combatants encountered with lances, in preſence of the queens, and all the ladies of the conrt [11].

Combats at the barrier. Feſtival of Nogent.

Combat of 1572.

Arts uſed.

We may ſee in the Memoirs of Marſhal Tavannes, with what pains the nobility and gentlemen endeavoured to harden their bodies, and to inure themſelves to ſupport the ſhocks and injuries, ſo commonly received in theſe fierce amuſements. He tells us, that at the tournament of 1549, he uſed every night to plunge his right arm into oil of ſweet almonds, and to tie ligatures round it; by which means, while many of his companions had their arms entirely black with contuſions, he preſerved his vigor and freſhneſs [12].

If we wiſh to form an eſtimate of the taſte and elegance, which accompanied the diverſions of the ſixteenth century, we may ſee them

[8] L'Art de Verif. vol. i. p. 648. Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 304.

[9] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 215.

[10] Manuſc. au Depôt de Bethune, N° 8722, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 85.

[11] Vie de Marg. p. 94.

[12] Tavannes, p. 127.

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Taſte of the diverſions.

fully diſplayed in the entertainments exhibited by Elizabeth, queen of England, in honor of her lover, Francis, duke of Anjou. On New Year's Day, 1582, a combat at the barrier was given, in the court of the palace of Weſtminſter; where the duke, accompanied by ſeveral noblemen, French and Engliſh, of the higheſt quality, defied all comers. He entered the liſts, in perſon, upon a carriage, conſtructed in form of a rock. His hands were fettered with golden chains, and he was conducted to the feet of Elizabeth, by love and deſtiny, who ſung alternately ſonnets compoſed in French, deſcriptive of the violence of his paſſion, and ſupplicating the queen to raiſe him to her throne and bed. The combat laſted till an hour after midnight, in preſence of two or three thouſand perſons; and the device choſen by the duke of Anjou for the occaſion, was,

" Serviet æternum, dulcis quem torquet Eliza."

in England.

His preſents on that day, to different noblemen, and ladies of the Engliſh court, amounted in value, to near ten thouſand crowns. To Elizabeth, he preſented a ſhip, compoſed of precious ſtones, which ſhe accepted with public teſtimonies of pleaſure and attachment. The queen even gave him more perſonal and flattering marks of her predilection, by kiſſing and toying with him, before all the ſpectators. She afterwards condeſcended to conduct him to his apartment, and to viſit him next day in his bed. Delicacy was not the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic of female manners, in that century; and the ſenſations which ladies of her exalted rank experienced, they conceived themſelves at liberty to expreſs, without any reſerve. It ought not to be forgotten, that this amorous princeſs was full forty-eight years of age, and her lover not more than twenty-ſeven. Maſquerades, in which Elizabeth danced with the duke, ſucceeded to the combats at the barrier. Magic and enchantments were called in, to the aid of muſic, and feſtivity. Impriſoned knights, detained by ſorcery in the dungeons of a caſtle, were liberated by the interpoſition of " a prince the moſt magnani-

" mous,

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" mous, and conſtant in love, and of a queen the moſt chaſte, vir-
" tuous, and heroic, who exiſted on earth." After extinguiſhing the Necromancer's lamp, which conſtituted the charm, Elizabeth, and Francis, advanced, and reſtored the captives to freedom. Every circumſtance, attending theſe gallant, and magnificent diverſions, may be found in the Memoirs of the duke of Nevers [13].

Decline of tournaments.

Under Henry the Third, it may be ſaid that tournaments finally expired. The laſt memorable one, of which hiſtory makes mention, was given by the duke of Mayenne, at Grenoble, in Dauphiné. Having invited the nobility of the province, and even the Proteſtants, againſt whom he was about to make ſerious and effective war, to break a lance in honor of the ladies; many gentlemen, Catholic and Hugonot, relying on his honor, complied with the ſummons. Leſdiguieres himſelf, the general of the Calviniſt party, was among the number. Mayenne received him with every mark of reſpect and diſtinction; nor had any of thoſe who repaired to Grenoble on the aſſurance of protection, reaſon to repent of their confidence. This event took place in 1580 [14]. Such was the fondneſs for tournaments, that they were varied in every ſhape, and not confined to a ſingle element. The water, as well as the land, became the ſcene of them. In 1568, Charles the Ninth exhibited to the Pariſians, the ſpectacle of a combat on the Seine, in front of the palace of the Louvre. He himſelf, in perſon, defended a boat againſt his brother, the duke of Anjou, who was the aſſailant. Brantome, ſo celebrated for his Memoirs, which have preſerved a number of curious and intereſting anecdotes, highly elucidatory of the manners of that age; was an actor in the entertainment. He informs us, that he ſaved with difficulty, one of his comrades, the baron de Monteſquieu, from being drowned, by plunging into the water, and drag-

Combats on the water.

[13] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 557—559.

[14] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 388. Trad. de l'Hop: vol. ii. Recherches, p. 85.

ging

ging him to the veſſel [15]. With what fatal conſequences, the tournaments of the ſixteenth century were attended, at an earlier period of it, may be collected from numberleſs inſtances. The marquis of Peſcara, during the wars between France and Spain, having ſent a defiance to the duke of Nemours, the French commander, challenging him to an encounter with lances, each accompanied by three choſen followers; the offer was inſtantly accepted. They met on the day appointed, under the walls of Aſti, in Piémont; and the leaders, after breaking their lances on each other's armor, without receiving any perſonal injury, raiſed their vizors, and interchanged embraces, with the utmoſt courteſy. But, on the part of their attendants, it did not end in ſo bloodleſs a manner. Two of the French, and one of the Spaniſh gentlemen, were mortally wounded, and either expired upon the ſpot, or only ſurvived a few days [16].

Fatal conſequences of them.

Numbers killed.

The particular ſpecies of combat, denominated "judicial," from its being an appeal to the immediate juſtice and interpoſition of the Supreme Being, in favor of innocence, had not totally diſappeared before the progreſs of reaſon, during the period under our examination. Francis the Firſt permitted, and was preſent at ſeveral, in the courſe of his reign; rather, as it would ſeem, in compliance with the barbarous prejudices of preceding times, than from conviction or real approbation of their principle [17]. The moſt celebrated combat of this kind, fought under the kings of the family of Valois, was between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye, in 1547, immediately after the acceſſion of Henry the Second. The cauſe of quarrel originated during the reign of Francis the Firſt; but, that prince, ſuperior to the age in which he flouriſhed, and grown parſimonious of the blood, as well as of the property of his ſubjects, prohibited the two parties from proceeding to extremities, on pain of his indignation [18]. He had the enlargement of mind to ſay, in his privy coun-

Judicial combats.

Combat of Jarnac, and La Chataigneraye.

[15] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 221 and 222.
[16] Ibid. p. 10—12.
[17] Brant. Les Duels, p. 35 and 36.
[18] Brant. ibid. p. 169 and 170.

cil,

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cil, when the matter was under debate, that "a ſovereign ought "never to ſanction or permit an act, from which no public benefit "could poſſibly reſult." His ſucceſſor did not imitate him in ſo judicious and beneficial a line of conduct. He was, even, in ſome meaſure, implicated in the ſubject of diſpute, and perſonally intereſted in its iſſue; having aſſerted, that Jarnac had, in confidence, confeſſed to him, when dauphin, a criminal intimacy with his own mother-in-law. La Chataigneraye, who maintained the truth of the allegation, was, therefore, the royal champion. He was, beſides, in the flower of his age, a diſtinguiſhed favorite of the new monarch, and remarkable above every nobleman of the court, for vigor, addreſs, and courage. Jarnac laboured under many diſadvantages; but, his own exertions, and the preſumption of his enemy, decided the conteſt in his favor.

Origin and cauſe of it.

Every circumſtance attending this combat, which may be ſaid to have been the laſt memorable one of its kind, is ſo highly characteriſtic of the modes of thinking and acting, at the period when it happened, that they claim attention. The ſcene choſen, was the park of St. Germain, near Paris, in preſence of Henry the Second, ſurrounded by all the lords and ladies of his court. It was preceded by every ceremony and ſolemnity, uſual in the darkeſt ages; and the two combatants ſwore, "on the Evangeliſts, on the "true Croſs, and on the Faith of Baptiſm, that they had not any "charms, words, or incantations; but, truſted wholly to God, their "right, the force of their body, and their arms[19]." Brantome, whoſe teſtimony on this occaſion may be regarded as, in ſome meaſure, partial to his uncle, La Chataigneraye, aſſerts, that he owed his misfortune, to Jarnac's adopting a piece of defenſive armor, not uſually worn; but, which the contempt of La Chataigneraye for his antagoniſt, induced him to overlook and admit[20]. It was invented by

Circumſtances attending it.

Ceremonies uſed.

[19] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 558.

[20] Brant. Les Duels, p. 50 and 51.

one

one of thoſe Italian maſters of the ſcience of arms, who were then in ſuch reputation, and of whom Jarnac received inſtructions, previous to the onſet. The heralds having proclaimed ſilence, and enjoined every ſpectator "neither to cough, ſpit, nor preſume to make any manual "ſign whatever," the weapons of offence were laſtly delivered. They conſiſted in a ſword, and two daggers; beſides two other ſwords of reſerve, which were held by the conſtable, as a ſupply, in caſe of accident. One of the heralds then gave the ſignal, by ſaying, "Let "them go, the good combatants [21]." CHAP. VI. Weapons.

The conteſt was ſoon decided: Jarnac, by a dextrous and unexpected back-ſtroke, cut the tendons of his adverſary's left leg, and repeated the blow, till he fell. It was in his power to have terminated all further hazard, by putting La Chataigneraye to death. But, conſcious of the king's partiality towards him, and ſatisfied with the advantage acquired, he uſed his victory with the utmoſt moderation. Leaving his wounded antagoniſt on the ground, he approached the place where Henry ſat; and putting himſelf on one knee, he beſought of his ſovereign to accept La Chataigneraye's life, and to reſtore him his own injured honor. It was not, however, till after three ſeparate requiſitions, made at diſtinct intervals; and till no hope remained of the combat being renewed, that Henry, ſolicited anew by Jarnac, exhorted by the duke of Vendome, and aſſured by the conſtable Montmorenci, of La Chataigneraye's deſperate condition, conſented to accept the proffered and forfeit boon. He afterwards embraced and commended Jarnac, declaring him reſtored in honor. La Chataigneraye, unable to ſurvive ſo public and humiliating a misfortune, tore the dreſſings from his wounds, and expired [22]. The mixture of religion with gallantry, is not the leaſt ſingular circumſtance of this extraordinary tranſaction. Jarnac, finding his enemy extended on the ground, and incapable of reſiſtance, immediately fell Iſſue of the combat. Spirit of gallantry, and of devotion.

[21] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 557 and 558. Sully, vol. i. p. 346.
[22] Brant. Les Duels, p. 48.

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upon his knees, and returned thanks aloud to God, lifting his hands and eyes to Heaven. He beat upon his breaſt with his gauntlet, exclaiming in Latin, "Lord, I am not worthy." Then, approaching the ſcaffold, on which the ladies were ſeated, among whom was one to whom he particularly addreſſed himſelf, he ſaid, "Madam, you "always aſſured me that it would terminate thus[23]."

Privileges of the conqueror.

The conqueror did not venture to uſe any of the privileges, allowed by the laws of chivalry to thoſe who vanquiſhed their adverſaries. How extenſive, as well as ignominious they were, we may judge from Brantome's account of a combat which took place at Sedan, beyond the limits of the French territories, ſoon after that between Jarnac and La Chataigneraye. Henry, equally ſhocked and chagrined at the diſaſtrous fate of his favorite, ſwore, never again, during his reign, to permit of a ſecond appeal to Heaven, by the mode of arms. Two gentlemen of his court, between whom a difference aroſe, had, therefore, recourſe to the duke of Bouillon, who, as an independant prince, inſtantly complied with the requeſt. But, one of the combatants, the Sieur de Fandilles, would not enter the place marked out for the liſts, till he had firſt ſeen a fire lighted, and a gibbet erected, on which he intended to hang, and afterwards conſume to aſhes, his antagoniſt's body[24]. The regret of Henry the Second for La Chataigneraye's loſs, added to the progreſs of reaſon, gradually extinguiſhed, and inſenſibly aboliſhed theſe abſurd, and ridiculous appeals, which ſavoured not more of folly, than of impiety. They may ſtill, however, be traced under Henry the Third; who was preſent at a judicial combat, between de Luines and Panier, in the commencement of his reign: but, the vogue which had antiently attended them, had completely ceaſed, before its cloſe[25]. The embaſſador of Solyman the Second, who had been a ſpectator of Jar-

Decline of judicial combats.

[23] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 559.

[24] Brant. Les Duels, p. 4.

[25] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 418.

nac's

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nac's ſucceſs, expreſſed his aſtoniſhment and diſapprobation, that a ſovereign ſhould thus publickly permit an act of deliberate murder to be performed in his preſence [26]. So much more juſtly did a Mahometan and a Turk appreciate right and wrong, than the firſt monarch of the Chriſtian world; and ſo faint were the efforts of the human mind, in oppoſition to eſtabliſhed prejudices, little more than two centuries ago, among the moſt civilized people in Europe.

Sentiments of the Ottoman embaſſador, on the inſtitution.

Solemn defiances, and challenges to ſingle combat, continued ſtill to characterize the age, and ſeem to have been as frequent as in the heroic times, when chiefs entruſted to their perſonal proweſs, the fate of armies and nations. Previous to a general action, while the forces on either ſide were preparing to engage, it was cuſtomary for the moſt intrepid, or adventurous individuals, to quit the ranks, and riding forward, to demand of their adverſaries a ſtroke of a lance, in honor of the ladies [27]. In 1577, we find the duke of Mayenne ſending to defy the prince of Condé, either ſingly, or with a choſen number of attendants. But, the anſwer returned by the prince, was, that whatever inclination he might feel to accept the challenge, it was a received principle, that combats never took place, except among equals [28]. Yet, the king of Navarre, ſome years afterwards, by a declaration, addreſſed to Henry the Third, requeſted permiſſion to equal himſelf with the duke of Guiſe, in order to decide the quarrel of the houſe of Bourbon with the League, by a combat between them, with arms uſed among knights [29]. The moſt ſingular encounter of this nature, happened on the ſecond of Auguſt, 1589, only three or four hours after the deceaſe of Henry the Third. L'Iſle Marivaut, a royaliſt gentleman, ſtung with grief and rage at the aſſaſſination of the king, his maſter, and deſirous to avenge it, defied the troops of the duke of Mayenne, and demanded, if any one would engage him, according to the laws of chivalry. Claude de

Defiances.

Inſtances of them.

Combat of Marolles and Marivaut.

[26] Brant. Les Duels, p. 206 and 207.
[27] Memoires de Marg. p. 183.
[28] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 510.
[29] Chron. Noven. vol. i. p. 8.

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Marolles inſtantly accepted the defiance; and the combatants, completely armed, met, in preſence of the two armies, under the walls of Paris. They were mounted on horſeback, and ruſhed forward at the ſame inſtant. Marivaut's lance was ſhivered on the cuiraſs of his adverſary, without effect: but, the ſpear of Marolles entered the eye of the royaliſt champion, who had neglected, from a preſumptuous confidence in his own proweſs, to faſten his vizor. He expired immediately; and the preachers of the League, animated by ſo auſpicious an omen, predicted the infallible deſtruction of the party of the king of Navarre, againſt whom Providence ſeemed to manifeſt its anger. The event did not, however, juſtify the prediction [30].

Event of it.

Taſte and elegance of the diverſions.

If we reflect upon the diverſity, taſte, and magnificence of the amuſements exhibited among the French, during the reigns of the four laſt princes of Valois, we ſhall find ample ſubject for admiration. In delicacy of conception, and even in the ſplendor of their execution, it may be pronounced that they were not greatly inferior to the boaſted pageants of Louis the Fourteenth, given near a century afterwards. As early as 1549, at the public entry of Henry the Second into Lyons, games, in imitation of the gladiatorial, and naval ſpectacles of the Romans, were preſented to that monarch [31]. We may ſee in the Memoirs of Margaret of Valois, how ſuperb, and how varied were the entertainments, imagined by Catherine of Medecis, to divert the leiſure, and to enliven the interview of her daughter, Elizabeth, queen of Spain, at Bayonne, in 1565. She choſe for the ſcene of one of her moſt ſumptuous feſtivals, the little iſland, in the river Bidaſſoa, which ſeparates the kingdoms of France and Spain; afterwards rendered memorable by the peace of the Pyrenees, in the ſucceeding century, between Louis the Fourteenth, and Philip the Fourth. Tables were diſpoſed for the courtiers and no-

Public games.

[30] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 257. Journal d'Henry IV. vol. i. p. 1 and 2. Brant. Les Duels, p. 62—64.

[31] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 13—22; and vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 388—392.

bility,

bility, male and female; that of the royal family, under a canopy, at one extremity of the apartment, being raiſed above the others by an aſcent of four ſteps, compoſed of turf. Companies of ſhepherdeſſes, dreſſed in cloth of gold and ſattin, and habited according to the dreſſes of the various French provinces, waited on the gueſts. They then performed the dances of their reſpective countries, in an adjoining meadow. On their paſſage by water, from Bayonne to the mouth of the Bidaſſoa, the ſplendid barges, in which the king, the queen-mother, and other attendants embarked, were accompanied, or ſurrounded by marine deities, ſinging, and reciting verſes in honor of the occaſion. The banquet was terminated by a "ballet" of nymphs and ſatyrs, executed with equal delicacy and taſte.

Mythological, and allegorical repreſentations.

The mythology of antiquity was rifled and exhauſted, in the maſques and entertainments which accompanied the nuptials of the king of Navarre, in 1572. The impending deſtruction of the Hugonots at the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, ſeemed even to be pourtrayed in the enigmatical repreſentations performed before the court. It is difficult to ſuppoſe, that Catherine of Medecis could intend thus to warn them of their danger: it is equally difficult not to admit, that the application was ſo clear and obvious, as to ſtrike the leaſt ſuſpicious, or diſcerning. The ſcenery repreſented the Elyſian Fields, or the Paradiſe of Moſes: for, the fables of Homer and Virgil were mixed, by a ſpecies of profanation, with the relation given in Scripture, of the Garden of Eden. A river, the Styx, traverſed the theatre, on which appeared the boat of Charon. Behind the Elyſium, was conſtructed an "Empyreal Heaven," containing within a piece of machinery, which had an orbicular motion, the twelve ſigns of the Zodiac, the ſeven planets, and an infinity of ſtars. Twelve nymphs, ſtationed in the Elyſian Fields, were protected by Charles the Ninth and his two brothers, who defended the entrance, armed from head to foot.

Scenery.

On

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On the other ſide of the Styx, appeared Hell, or "Tartarus," with its proper attributes. The king of Navarre, the prince of Condé, and the Hugonot nobility, who aſſailed the Elyſian Fields, were overcome, and precipitated into the infernal regions. Mercury and Cupid then deſcended on the ſtage; and after different dances, the captives were releaſed. The repreſentation terminated by fire-works, which conſumed to aſhes the whole machinery and decorations [32]. The Heaven, vainly attacked by the king of Navarre; the precipitation of himſelf and his followers into Hell; and the flames which cloſed the exhibition; all appeared to have an allegorical alluſion. Four days afterwards, the maſſacre of Paris took place.

Splendid entertainments of the French court.

Magnificent as were the entertainments of 1572, they were excelled by thoſe of the following year, at the reception of the Poliſh embaſſadors, who came to offer the crown of their kingdom, to the duke of Anjou. In one of them, the Poles beheld with pleaſure and aſtoniſhment, a prodigious maſs of rock, encruſted with ſilver, which was moved by concealed mechaniſm. On the ſummit, were placed ſixteen of the moſt beautiful women of quality, emblematical of the ſixteen provinces of the kingdom of France. After ſinging, and repeating ſome verſes compoſed for the occaſion, by Ronſard and Dorat, they deſcended; preſented to the new monarch various offerings or teſtimonies of homage; and concluded by performing a dance [33]. It is not eaſy to repreſent to ourſelves, even in the preſent age, any thing, conceived with more elegance of fancy. At the nuptials of the duke of Joyeuſe, which were celebrated in 1581, the queen, Louiſa, exhibited in the Louvre, a "ballet" of Circé and her nymphs, executed with incomparable grace, by the ladies of the royal houſehold [34]. We can ſcarcely credit, notwithſtanding the well-known prodigality of Henry the Third, and the teſtimony of contemporary writers, that he expended in various feſtivities and diverſions, on

Expence attending them.

[32] Vie de Marg. de Val. p. 90—92.
[33] Ibid. p. 123.
[34] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 134.

the

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the above-mentioned marriage, a ſum of not leſs than a hundred and fifty thouſand pounds [35]. Many of the maſques, or dances, given at court, were celebrated by Deſportes, the poet, who compoſed ſtanzas for the principal characters. We find in his works, the names of theſe diverſions, which are taken uſually from ſome mythological, or romantic fable. There is the maſquerade of the "Chevaliers fideles," and of the "Chevaliers agitez." In another, denominated the "Maſquerade of Viſions," Night and Morning appear, and repeat verſes in honor of the newly-married pair. They are ingenious, melodious, and full of grace [36]. Ronſard introduces the moſt fantaſtic and ideal beings, or perſonages, in his maſques. The four elements, perſonified, come forward in one of them, to defy the four planets, who accept the challenge [37]. Syrens, and mermaids, predict the future deſtiny of the French monarchs [38]. Charles the Ninth, habited one while as the Sun, and at another as Hercules, pronounces a cartel to love, which is ſent by a dwarf. Such was the genius and taſte of the entertainments of that age.

Puerile amuſements.

The indecent puerility, or contempt of public opinion, manifeſted by Henry the Third, roſe to ſuch a pitch, that he did not bluſh to appear commonly in the ſtreets of his own capital, playing with a "Bilboquet." The faſhion became general: Joyeuſe and Epernon imitated their maſter; and in a ſhort time, all the gentlemen, pages, and even domeſtics, were ſeen every where, in public, with the ſame appendage [39]. It muſt be owned, that if rebellion was ever venial, it might plead ſome excuſe, when provoked by ſuch profuſion, folly, and abuſe of power. De Thou himſelf aſſures us, that the king expended above twelve thouſand pounds annually, in the ſingle article of little dogs; beſides the ſums conſumed on monkeys, parroquets, and other animals [40]. The ball given by him to the

Balls.

[35] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra p. 130.
[36] Œuvres de des Portes, p. 460—470.
[37] Ibid. de Ronſard, Maſcarades, p. 127—129.
[38] Œuvres de Ronſard, Maſcarades, p. 127—129.
[39] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 195.
[40] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 599.

Engliſh

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Engliſh embaſſadors, in 1585, coſt him ten thouſand crowns [41]. Two years afterwards, at Epernon's nuptials, he danced in public, with every indication of mirth, while, at his waiſt hung a large chaplet of ivory ſkulls [42]. Like Heliogabalus, he affected the ornaments and dreſs of a woman. The accounts given us by Dion and Herodian, of the indecent appearance of the Syrian emperor of Rome, were realized by the French monarch. In 1577, he commonly frequented public entertainments, in a female attire; his doublet open, and his boſom bare; with a necklace of pearls, and three little capes, as they were then worn by the ladies of the court [43].

Effeminacy, and indecorum.

It would, however, be unjuſt, to appreciate the general character of the age, even in its paſtimes, by the conduct or actions of ſo relaxed and effeminate a prince. The ſports of the period were not only manly; but, rough, hazardous, and daring, to a point of temerity. Marſhal Tavannes was accuſtomed, when young, to amuſe himſelf with his companions, in leaping acroſs the ſtreets of Paris, from the roof of one houſe to that of another [44]. In preſence of the court, at Fontainbleau, he undertook, and performed a leap on horſeback, of twenty-eight feet, from rock to rock [45]. Frolics the moſt adventurous and deſperate were common, particularly in time of carnival, when every indiſcretion ſeemed to be ſanctioned by the ſeaſon. Henry the Second, in 1558, accompanied by the princes and youth of his court, on Shrove Tueſday, a day peculiarly diſtinguiſhed for extravagant demonſtrations of conviviality; rode through the ſtreets of Paris, maſked, committing the raſheſt actions. In a fit of wild emulation, the whole company mounted the great ſtaircaſe of the hall in which were held the courts of juſtice, and galloped furiouſly down again, without incurring any accident [46]. We find Henry the Third himſelf, in the carnival of 1583, and the following year, per-

Rude diverſions of the age.

Examples.

Henry the Second.

[41] L'Etoile, p. 85.
[42] Ibid. p. 102.
[43] Ibid. p. 21.
[44] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 326.
[45] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 527.
[46] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 401.

forming

forming the ſame mad exploits, followed by his brother, the duke of Anjou, and his minions [47]. They rode at full ſpeed through the capital, in maſks, overturning, beating, and ill-uſing every one who fell in their way. On the night of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, when the aſſaſſins came to the door of the count de la Rochefoucault's apartment, and demanded entrance; he had ſo little ſuſpicion of any deſign againſt his life, that he imagined it to be Charles the Ninth himſelf, at the head of a band of young courtiers, bent on ſome juvenile frolic. Impreſſed with this idea, he roſe, and dreſſed himſelf, exclaiming all the time, "Theſe are the tricks of the late king, your "father; but, you will not catch me thus." The door was no ſooner opened, than he was inſtantly murdered [48].

Charles the Ninth.

Occupations the moſt ſevere and laborious, were conſidered as paſtimes, and practiſed by ſovereign princes for their diverſion. Charles the Ninth beheaded animals, diſſected them, and performed the functions of an executioner and a butcher, with ſingular addreſs [49]. The preſent age, however refined, has not been wanting in a ſimilar example of a crowned head, one of whoſe greateſt enjoyments conſiſted in opening, and embowelling the deer, or other game, which he had previouſly killed. It was common for Charles the Ninth to work at the forge, and even to make with his own hands, the barrels of muſquets and harquebuſſes [50]. Brantome ſays, that Philibert Emanuel, duke of Savoy, conſtantly amuſed himſelf at the ſame robuſt exerciſe; and, that he had ſeen the duke practiſe at his forge, in the garden of the palace, at Turin [51].

Occupations and amuſements of the great.

Forging armor.

There was not any piece of coin, either gold or ſilver, which Charles the Ninth had not learnt to ſtrike ſo exquiſitely, and to counterfeit ſo perfectly, as to deceive the niceſt eye. It was one of his favorite recreations to fabricate them, and to ſhew them to his cour-

Coining.

[47] L'Etoile, p. 62, and p. 75.
[48] Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 9 and 10.
[49] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 25.
[50] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 25. Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 28.
[51] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 164 and 166.

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tiers [52]. We can ſtill leſs reconcile to our manners and ideas of royal decorum, his introduction of ten thieves and common cutpurſes, into the drawing-room of the Louvre, during a crouded ball and feſtival; with orders to them to exerciſe their addreſs, at the expence of the company. He gave them aſſurance of impunity; watched their feats of dexterity; reviewed the amount of their plunder, which exceeded in value fifteen hundred crowns; permitted them to retain it; and then diſmiſſed them with menaces of being inſtantly hanged, if ever they ventured to repeat their depredations [53]. It muſt be confeſſed, that ſuch a conduct was not much calculated to amend the morals, or effect the reformation of that claſs of his ſubjects. Bear-hunting was one of the ſports of the court of Navarre. How hazardous was the purſuit of thoſe animals, and how fatal the accidents which continually attended the chace, we may ſee in Sully. In *1578*, during the courſe of one given by the king of Navarre, in the province of Foix, at the foot of the Pyrenees; a bear, purſued by the hunters, and driven to madneſs by the number of lances fixed in his body, ſeized ſeven or eight of the ſoldiers ſtationed on the point of a rock, and precipitating himſelf with them, daſhed them to pieces [54]. Theſe tragical adventures neither diminiſhed the ardor of the ſportſmen, nor tended to humanize and ſoften the genius of the diverſions.

Bear-hunting.

Colors and devices.

The period of time under our review, may be juſtly called the age of colors and devices. The former were worn, in honor of their miſtreſſes, by kings, noblemen, and gentlemen of every rank. Marriage impoſed no reſtraint in this particular. At the naval games exhibited before Henry the Second and his queen, by the city of Lyons, in 1549, the gallies which obtained the honors of triumph, were decorated with black and white, in compliment to the king and his miſtreſs, Diana of Poitiers. Thoſe which were vanquiſhed, diſplayed green; the color always affected by Catherine of Medecis,

[52] Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 29. [53] Ibid. p. 29—31. [54] Sully, vol. i. p. 23.

before

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before her huſband's death [55]. No umbrage whatever appears to have been taken by her, at ſo public a mark of homage to her rival. On the day when Henry was killed by Montgomery, in the liſts at Paris, he was diſtinguiſhed by the ſame livery. The three other princes, who maintained the barrier with the king, againſt all aſſailants; and who were the dukes of Guiſe, Nemours, and Ferrara, each, appeared in the colors of their reſpective miſtreſſes [56]. "Buſſy d'Amboiſe "wore," ſays Brantome, "two 'favors,' given him by his miſtreſs; "one in his hat, the other about his neck. When he was ordered to "quit the court of France, by Henry the Third, whoſe minions he "had inſulted and defied; he beſought of me to aſſure the lady "whom he ſerved, that thoſe favors would infallibly induce him to "put to death the favorites, who had produced the affront received "by him [57]." It was well known, that the lady in queſtion was the queen of Navarre. Colors were aſſumed, not only as marks of devotion and gallantry towards the ladies; but, as badges of friendſhip and adherence. At the judicial combat of Jarnac and La Chataigneraye, the band of gentlemen who were in the intereſts of the latter nobleman, amounted to five hundred, all habited in his colors, white and red. Thoſe attached to Jarnac, did not exceed a hundred, dreſſed in white and black [58]. On all occaſions of danger, or glory, lovers never failed to decorate themſelves in the colors, or favors, beſtowed by the object of their affection [59].

Univerſally worn.

Badges of gallantry, and friendſhip.

The imagination was tortured in the invention of devices, anagrams, and mottos, aſſumed by perſons of both ſexes. Margaret, the ſecond queen of Navarre of that name, ſpeaking of her litter, ſays; "there were, either in the lining, or in the windows of it, "forty different devices, the words of which were in Spaniſh or "Italian, upon the Sun and its effects." She had choſen a Sun for

Devices.

[55] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 20.
[56] Ibid. p. 39.
[57] Ibid. vol. iii. ibid. p. 404.
[58] Brant. Les Duels, p. 60.
[59] Ibid. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 316; and vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 402.

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her emblem[60]. In 1568, Cruſſol, one of the Hugonot commanders, upon his ſtandard, cauſed to be repreſented a Hydra, all the heads of which were ornamented with the dreſſes of cardinals, biſhops, and monks. He himſelf, in the character of Hercules, was depictured as employed in their extermination. The motto, "Qui caſſo, "crudeles," was an anagram on his name, Jacques de Cruſſol[61]. When Francis the Firſt quitted his miſtreſs, the counteſs de Chateaubriant, and attached himſelf to the ducheſs of Eſtampes; he demanded of the former his "devices," which he had cauſed to be inſcribed, or engraven on all his preſents to her. They were of the invention and compoſition of his ſiſter, Margaret of Valois, and were regarded as the moſt delicate productions of female taſte[62].

Rage for play.

The rage for play may be juſtly reckoned among the characteriſtic features of the age. It was carried to a pernicious height, under the reign of Henry the Third; and tended eminently to produce a general depravity of manners. That monarch eſtabliſhed in the Louvre itſelf, in 1579, a gaming-table for cards and dice, open to all comers, and at which he gave the example of playing conſtantly, in perſon. A company of Italians, who profited of his permiſſion, won from him fifteen thouſand crowns, in the courſe of a month[63]. Epernon imitated the model ſet him by his maſter. On the evening previous to his departure for Gaſcony, in 1584, on the embaſſy to the king of Navarre, he loſt above three hundred pounds ſterling, to marſhal Retz[64]. The rapid progreſs of ſo deſtructive a vice, may be aſcertained from Brantome. "The parties at tennis," ſays he, "under "Henry the Second, were for one, two, and three hundred crowns at "moſt, even when the king played himſelf. At preſent, they are "for two, three thouſand, and even double that ſum[65]." Mary of Guiſe, queen-dowager of Scotland, loſt three thouſand crowns, in one

Examples of it.

[60] Vie de Marg. p. 202. Memoires de Marg. p. 112.

[61] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 589.

[62] Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 455 and 456.

[63] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fr. p. 105.

[64] Ibid. p. 176.

[65] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 46.

evening,

evening, to Monſieur d'Eſſe, a French gentleman, then reſident in her court [66]. It ſeems to have been her whole ſtock of ready money, as ſhe continued the game, upon honor, without any ſtake. We may ſee the price of a pack of cards, purchaſed at the manufactury itſelf, in Montaigne. He ſays, that in 1581, he paid for ordinary ones, at Thiers, in Auvergne, where they were fabricated; only one ſous, or a halfpenny, the pack. But, for finer ones, they demanded above ſix ſous, or three-pence [67].

Cards.

Theatrical exhibitions began to be known under Henry the Third, as a public diverſion. In February, 1577, a company of Italian comedians, who entitled themſelves "Li Geloſi," and whom that prince had invited from Venice, arrived in France. On their way to the court, they fell into the hands of the Hugonots; and the king, in order to procure their deliverance, was neceſſitated to pay a conſiderable ranſom. They began to perform dramatic pieces, by his permiſſion, in the great hall, uſually appropriated to the convocation of the States General, in the caſtle of Blois, where he then reſided [68]. The remonſtrances of the clergy, and of the cardinal of Bourbon himſelf, could not induce Henry to delay the commencement of the comedies, or paſtorals, as they were denominated, till the end of Lent [69]. On his return to Paris, in the month of May of the ſame year, the comedians opened a theatre in the palace of Bourbon, near the Louvre, where they renewed their exhibition. It would ſeem, that there was no diſtinction of places, in the part of the theatre allotted to the ſpectators; as the price of all ſeats indiſcriminately was fixed at four ſous, or two-pence. The concourſe of people to partake of ſo novel a ſpecies of entertainment, was immenſe [70]. But, in the following month, the Parliament iſſued a prohibition to continue a diverſion, which the magiſtrates conceived to be of a nature ex-

Theatrical exhibitions.

Italian comedians.

[66] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 191.
[67] Voyages de Mont. vol. iii. p. 455.
[68] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 78.
[69] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 173 and 177.
[70] Ibid. p. 79.

tremely

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tremely injurious to national manners. From this ſentence, the Italians appealed, and preſented the royal letters patent, authorizing them to perform, in defiance of the mandates of the Parliament. It was in vain that the preſident and members of that body impoſed a fine of four hundred pounds on the comedians, if they preſumed to obtain or plead the king's ſanction. Henry interpoſed; and by his expreſs command, the foreigners reſumed and continued their performances, under his immediate protection [71]. Nothing can more forcibly prove, how low was the ſtate of the French drama, than the exiſtence of an Italian theatre in the metropolis, at a time that a national one was unknown.

Sustained by the king, againſt the Parliament.

Among the evils, to which anarchy and contempt of the laws had given birth, after the commencement of the civil wars, may be reckoned the practice of counterfeiting the current coin. It is difficult to conceive how univerſal it had become, and to what a degree the money in common circulation was debaſed. Towards the concluſion of Henry the Third's reign, France was inundated with falſe coiners, who ſubſtituted the baſeſt metals, in place of gold and ſilver. Tavannes aſſures us, that gentlemen retained in their caſtles and houſes, perſons ſkilled in the art of fabricating money, whom they dignified with the appellation of philoſophers; and who, after quitting the laboratory, eat at the tables of their employers. He adds, that thoſe gentlemen who only counterfeited dollars and florins, which were German coins, and who abſtained from ſtriking French money, regarded themſelves as free from all criminality [72]. Salcede, who was put to death in 1582, for having conſpired againſt the State, had merited an exemplary puniſhment by his preceding crimes. Notwithſtanding the penalty annexed to falſifying the coin of the kingdom, which was no leſs than throwing the culprit into boiling oil; he had fabricated ſuch a quantity of baſe money, as to enable him to make with it, the purchaſe of an eſtate [73]. It was not till the final termination

Counterfeit coin.

Practice, general.

[71] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 81 and 82.

[72] Tavannes, p. 132 and 133.

[73] Buſbeq. letter 8th.

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of the diſſenſions of France, and the reſtoration of vigor in the execution of the laws, that ſo pernicious an abuſe was aboliſhed.

Retainers.

The practice of keeping retainers among the great; one of the moſt powerful ſupports of the feudal ſyſtem, and which the policy, or tyranny of the two firſt princes of the houſe of Tudor had totally extinguiſhed in England; continued ſtill to exiſt among the French. It even derived ſtrength, and became more confirmed, from the diſorders of the court and kingdom, under the reigns of the three laſt ſovereigns of Valois. Every nobleman had his followers, whoſe numbers bore a proportion to the power and conſequence of their patron. Tavannes ſays, that at the death of Henry the Second, the conſtable Montmorenci, on his retreat to his own houſe, was abandoned by at leaſt a hundred gentlemen, who had always been accuſtomed to follow in his train [74]. The greater number of theſe, ranged themſelves under the protection of the Guiſes, who were then poſſeſſed of authority. We may judge how much the royal dignity was obſcured and enfeebled, by the adherence of ſo many individuals to their reſpective lords, from the relation left us by Brantome. "At the deceaſe of Francis the Second," ſays he, "I was at Orleans, "and was a witneſs to the devotion of the whole court to the duke "of Guiſe. Seven, or eight days after that event, he went on a "pilgrimage to Clery, on foot: he was accompanied by almoſt all "the nobility and courtiers; the new king remaining nearly alone, "chagrined, and jealous at ſuch a preference [75]."

Numbers of them, about the nobility.

The Guiſes.

Entrance of the duke of Guiſe into Paris.

Even in the following year, 1561, after the duke's retreat from court to his caſtles in Champagne; when, at the earneſt ſolicitation of the queen-mother, he re-appeared at Paris, it was at the head of a band of followers, which impreſſed reſpect and terror. Brantome, who was one of the number, and who attended him to the levee of Charles the Ninth, deſcribes his dreſs, arms, and behaviour on that

[74] Tavannes, p. 220.

[75] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 77.

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occaſion. They were ſuch as Sylla, or Cæſar, might have adopted, when entering Rome; and bore no reſemblance to the humility of a ſubject, approaching the foot of the throne. "Beſides his ſword," adds Brantome, "I ſaw him order three daggers to be brought into "his cloſet, of which he ſelected the ſharpeſt."—"He was mounted "on a black gennet, and accompanied by three, or four hundred "gentlemen [76]." It muſt be confeſſed, that ſo formidable a train ſeemed more calculated to ſhake, than to confirm the crown, on the head of the young king.

Poverty and dependance of the retainers.

Many of theſe unfortunate retainers ſtarved in the ſervice of the princes or grandees, to whom they devoted themſelves. Coconas, who was put to death in 1574, for a ſort of conſpiracy to procure the eſcape of Francis, duke of Anjou; ſays, in his confeſſion, that "he had been eight years a retainer of the duke, without having "ever received from him, in the courſe of that time, wherewithal to "purchaſe himſelf even a hat [77]." Henry the Third became, from the ſovereign of a great people, only the head and chief of a band of gentlemen, who filled the court with continual diſputes, cauſed by their inſolence, and temerity. His brother, the duke of Guiſe, and all the principal nobles, had, in like manner, their partizans. It was deemed an object of triumph, to ſeduce thoſe of each other. Epernon, who roſe to ſuch a point of favor and grandeur, towards the end of Henry's reign, was originally in the ſervice of the duke of Anjou; as were Maugiron, Livarot, and others of the minions [78]. When a forced reconciliation took place in the royal preſence, between Buſſy d'Amboiſe and a gentleman named St. Fal, in 1577; the former had the audacity to enter the palace of the Louvre itſelf, attended by above two hundred determined and devoted friends. Henry the Third expreſſed his indignation at it; but, did not venture to

Their inſolence.

Buſſy d'Amboiſe.

[76] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 85.
[77] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 371.
[78] Vie de Marg. p. 232.

attempt

attempt its repreſſion, or puniſhment. Buſſy even augmented the train of his followers, during his ſtay in the capital, as his beſt protection and ſecurity againſt the vengeance of his ſovereign, whom he braved and defied [79]. It was, in fact, the only effectual preſervative from aſſaſſins and murderers [80]. We find the duke of Epernon, in 1585, on his ſetting out to viſit the king of Navarre, carrying with him above five hundred gentlemen; and at his appearance before the king, his maſter, at Chartres, after the flight of Henry from Paris, he was ſurrounded by as numerous a band [81]. The great nobles became almoſt independant of the crown, and maintained, each, a ſort of ſeparate court, protected by their armed followers. In 1588, the duke of Nevers offered to arm, and pay one hundred gentlemen, at his own expence, for three years, to ſerve againſt the Proteſtants [82]. Henry the Third was equally incapable of carrying on war with vigor, or of ſupporting his own authority in time of peace.

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Epernon.

'The treachery and violation of faith which characterized the age, gave birth to a race of men who infeſted ſociety, and who derived a ſubſiſtence from betraying the ſecrets of thoſe with whom they lived. Spies became one of the principal engines of ſtate, under Catherine of Medecis; and ſhe expended conſiderable ſums for their maintenance about the perſons of all thoſe whom ſhe diſtruſted. So pernicious an invention tended eminently to deſtroy mutual confidence, friendſhip, and fidelity. We find that no rank, birth, or ſituation, elevated the poſſeſſor above aſſuming the odious office of a ſpy. Bellegarde, a marſhal of France, condeſcended to act the part of one, about Damville, at the perſuaſion of the court [83]. The queen-dowager uſually retained in her immediate pay, from twenty to thirty; all of whom were, as might be naturally expected, the moſt depraved and abandoned of mankind [84]. She even entertained them in the houſehold

Spies. Their numbers.

[79] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. 399 and 400.
[80] Vie de Marg. p. 166.
[81] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 86, and p. 198.
[82] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 75.
[83] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 528.
[84] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 45.

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of her own ſons; and Coſmo Ruggieri, a Florentine, who pretended to a knowledge of magic, ſerved her in that capacity, near the duke of Alenſon. He betrayed her to the duke, divulged all her ſecrets, and was involved in the conſpiracy of la Mole and Coconas, in 1574[85]. Charles the Ninth employed a lady of the queen of Navarre, to watch her actions, and received from her a regular information of his ſiſter's conduct. Many of the original letters, addreſſed by her to the king, are yet preſerved[86]. Margaret informs us, that ſhe herſelf, at the preſſing ſolicitation of her brother, the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third; undertook, and executed the employment of a confidential ſpy over her mother and Charles the Ninth. It ought not to be forgotten, that when ſhe accepted the taſk, ſhe had ſcarcely completed her ſeventeenth year[87]. Nor were theſe agents of a perfidious and unprincipled policy, confined to France. All the courts and cabinets of Europe were filled with the emiſſaries of Catherine and Henry the Third. In 1574, we find her writing to the French embaſſador in England, enjoining him to ſend over a ſpy, named Jannoton, to the camp of the prince of Orange, in Flanders; and ſpecifying his annual appointments, which were fixed at twelve hundred livres[88]. It appears from the letters of the king to the ſame miniſter, in 1577, that he maintained numbers of ſecret agents and penſioners in the court of Elizabeth[89].

Ruggieri.

Margaret of Valois.

Foreign ſpies.

One of the greateſt ſcourges of the time, was the rage for duels, which prevailed univerſally among the men of quality and condition. The continual practice of arms, the facility of obtaining pardon, and the debility of the laws, carried the evil to its utmoſt height. La Noue declares, that if a calculation had been made of the number of gentlemen who periſhed every year in theſe encounters; it would be

Duels.

Frequency of them.

[85] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 376.

[86] Depôt de Bethune, Manuſ. 8676, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. p. 102.

[87] Vie de Marg. p. 18—22.

[88] About fifty pounds. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 419.

[89] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 508.

found, that many battles had been fought, with leſs effuſion of generous blood [90]. Under the predeceſſors of Henry the Third, duels, however frequent, or fatal, were, at leaſt, limited to the two perſons between whom cauſe of quarrel had ariſen. But, during his reign, originated the mode of involving in the effects of the diſpute, the ſeconds and friends on either ſide. The firſt introduction of ſo abſurd and deſtructive a cuſtom, was exhibited in the memorable duel between Quelus and Entragues, in 1578. The former gentleman repaired to the place of action, near the Baſtile, attended by two others of the royal minions, Maugiron and Livarot. With Entragues, came Schomberg and Riberac. "Theſe ſix champions," ſays de Thou, "met at break of day, and engaged in deep ſilence [91]." Four of the ſix expired either on the ſpot, or, in a few days afterwards. They wore no defenſive arms, and fought with the ſword and dagger. Brantome, who has left us a minute relation of the event, compares it to the combat of the Horatii, and the Curiatii, in the fabulous ages of Rome and Alba. He aſſerts, that Entragues, who killed his antagoniſt Quelus; and who alone of the two ſurvivors, eſcaped unwounded, owed his advantage and preſervation to the circumſtance of having armed himſelf with a dagger; whereas his adverſary was deſtitute of any weapon, except the ſword [92]. Inſtead of exerting the force of the laws, to repreſs and puniſh ſo audacious an infraction of them, in his own capital; the king abandoned himſelf to the emotions of grief for the loſs of his favorites [93].

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Seconds.

Quelus and Entragues.

Impunity of duels.

This extraordinary combat was not the only one of its kind, which diſtinguiſhed the period before us. Biron, ſon to the firſt marſhal of that name, and who ſuffered capital puniſhment for his treaſonable conſpiracies, in the beginning of the ſeventeenth century; fought, at an early period of his life, a ſimilar duel with the prince of Carency.

Biron, and Carency.

[90] La Noue, Douzieme Diſc. p. 244.
[91] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 726.
[92] Brant. Les Duels, p. 99—101.
[93] L'Etoile, p. 28. Brant. Les Duels, ibid.

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Two ſeconds, on either ſide, who not only were completely unconnected with the diſpute between the principals; but, who were intimately acquainted, and in habits of general friendſhip; joined in the fray, and betrayed equal animoſity. We may judge of the mutual fury which animated them, when we find that they met at day-light, in the midſt of a ſtorm of ſnow, which drove with ſo much violence as almoſt to intercept the ſight. The precautions taken by them to prevent a diſcovery, were ſuch, that they had no ſpectators, except ſome accidental paſſengers. Biron and his two ſeconds having, with great addreſs, taken their ground in a manner to avail themſelves of the ſnow, which was driven in the faces of their adverſaries, laid them all three dead on the ground. No legal proceeding, or proſecution, ſeems to have been inſtituted againſt the victorious ſurvivors [94]. The ſlighteſt cauſes; a word, careleſsly or unguardedly uttered, a look, or a geſture, were ſufficient to produce a challenge. No age or rank exempted from their acceptance. La Chaſnaye, who was killed by Sourdiac, in a duel, under Henry the Second, was eighty years old [95]. To prevent every kind of deceit, and to obviate the ſuſpicion of wearing concealed armor, it was cuſtomary to fight in their ſhirts only. In 1579, Buſſy d'Amboiſe, and Angeau, for a trifling difference, fought two gentlemen, at Alenſon: they were all four deſtitute of any dreſs, except ſhirts [96].

Circumſtances of that duel.

Other inſtances.

The moſt formidable duelliſt of the age, was the baron de Vitaux. He was equally dextrous, experienced, and intrepid. Numbers of gentlemen, in every part of France, had fallen victims to his ſuperior ſkill. His vengeance knew no limit; and even Henry the Third trembled at the proweſs and deſperate reſolution of one of his own ſubjects [97]. His renown was ſuch, that it ſpread over all Europe; and foreigners who viſited France, were anxious to ſee a champion ſo

Hiſtory of Vitaux.

[94] De Thou, vol. ix. p. 592 and 593. Brant. Les Duels, p. 102—104. La Noue, p. 246 and 247.

[95] Brant. Les Duels, p. 259—261.

[96] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 105.

[97] Buſbeq. letter 22, p. 140.

fortunate

fortunate and celebrated [98]. After having been compelled to fly into Italy, in order to eſcape the puniſhment ready to be inflicted on him for the various lives which he had deſtroyed; he ventured to return to Paris, in 1573, on a new project of revenge. To facilitate it, he lay concealed, ſuffered his beard to grow to an unuſual length, and put on the diſguiſe of a lawyer. Millaud, a gentleman, who had murdered the baron's brother, was then reſident in the metropolis. Vitaux, accompanied by two brothers of the name of Boucicaut, who were called his lions; watched the moment when his enemy was paſſing through one of the principal ſtreets, attended by five or ſix men; attacked him, left him dead on the ſpot, and eſcaped. He was taken, and confined; but, by the powerful interceſſion of his friends, obtained a pardon [99]. Ten years afterwards, the ſon of Millaud, who had attained to manhood, and who nouriſhed an ardent deſire to avenge his father's death, demanded reparation of Vitaux. They met, without the walls of Paris, naked in their ſhirts only, armed with a ſword and a poniard. There, the baron, abandoned by his good fortune, and rendered careleſs, by his contempt for ſo young an adverſary; received a mortal wound, and expired immediately [100].

His exploits, and death.

It is in the Memoirs of d'Aubigné, that we may ſee in the ſtrongeſt colors, the extravagancies and acts of temerity, by which the gentlemen of his time were characterized. They cheerfully incurred the greateſt expences, and made the longeſt and moſt toilſome journeys, in order to meet in their ſhirts, and decide their differences with the ſword. D'Aubigné rode from the vicinity of Orleans, to Caſtelgeloux in Gaſcony, acroſs half of France, to fight la Magdelaine; with whom his chief reaſon for quarrelling, appears to have been, on account of the reputation acquired by the latter. La Magdelaine had diſpatched eight gentlemen in ſingle combat, without loſing a drop of blood. This paſſion for duels, by one of the inconſiſtencies ſo com-

Rage for duels.

Mixture of religion and revenge.

[98] Brant. Les Duels, p. 119.

[99] Ibid. p. 120—124.

[100] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 165. Brant. Les Duels, p. 116—118. Buſbeq. p. 138—141.

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mon in human nature, was not incompatible with fervent piety. D'Aubigné, on the point of meeting la Magdelaine, ſays, that he roſe early, and prayed devoutly to God. It is certain, that his inflexible adherence to his religious principles and profeſſions, was highly injurious to his fortune and elevation in life [101].

Under Francis the Firſt, duels were comparatively unknown: the manners of the nation, more ſimple, were far more pure; and the royal authority, ſuſtaining the laws, repreſſed the licentiouſneſs which afterwards grew up under three reigns of minority, conſpiracies, and civil war [102]. Some weak, and ineffectual efforts, to ſet limits to ſo pernicious a practice, were made by Henry the Third, in 1579; but, as they were rather calculated for reconciling, than for puniſhing the parties engaged in quarrels, little advantage accrued from the attempt [103]. In 1588, at the convocation of the States by Henry the Third, Montholon, keeper of the ſeals, in his ſpeech to the aſſembly, enumerating the national evils that called for redreſs; inſiſted ſtrongly upon the impiety and deſtructive conſequences of the practice of duelling. But, no meaſures were taken to produce a reformation, or to puniſh thoſe who perſiſted in the open infraction of the laws [104].

Supineneſs of government.

The gratification of revenge, one of the ſtrongeſt paſſions of the human mind, when not controlled by the terror of puniſhment; was not even reſtrained in every inſtance, by the finer ties of honor. Aſſaſſination and murder, tacitly, if not openly ſanctioned by the ſovereign, exhibited ſcenes of horror, over which, from their publicity, it is not poſſible to draw a veil, and the bare narration of which excite equal abhorrence and incredulity. It is one of the moſt hideous, as it is one of the moſt prominent features of the time under our contemplation. We are only at a loſs, in the multi-

Aſſaſſinations.

[101] D'Aub. Mem. p. 75—77.

[102] La Noue, p. 244 and 245. Brant. Les Duels, p. 182.

[103] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 608.

[104] De Thou, vol. x. p. 386. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 92.

tude of facts which preſent themſelves, to ſelect thoſe, calculated to depicture the ſpirit and temper of the age in its ſtrongeſt point of view. Can we, in fact, be ſurprized that individuals ſhould gratify their reſentment, jealouſy, or hatred, without limit, when we know that Charles the Ninth, encouraged, and employed aſſaſſins [105]? Catherine of Medecis, and her ſon, the duke of Anjou, afterwards Henry the Third; did not heſitate to ſuborn, and to inſtruct Maurevel, who, under their immediate directions, aimed the balls at Coligni, by which he was wounded, in 1572, previous to the maſſacre of Paris. Five thouſand crowns were ſtipulated as the reward for the aſſaſſination of the admiral, which Maurevel undertook, ſome years earlier, at the perſonal ſolicitation of Charles the Ninth himſelf. Unable to find a favorable occaſion for his purpoſe, and continually baffled by the precautions which Coligni took for his ſecurity; he determined to merit the protection of the court, by a ſervice of importance, though of inferior magnitude. Having joined the Hugonot army, he was there received, and protected by Vaudré, Sieur de Mouy, one of the braveſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed officers of the Proteſtant forces. That generous and unſuſpecting friend divided with Maurevel, his bed, his table, and his purſe. But, ſo many acts of hoſpitality and affection neither made an impreſſion on him, nor delayed the execution of his deſign. Having availed himſelf of the ſame opportunity which enabled Martialis to ſtab Caracalla, he fired a piſtol-ball into his benefactor's reins, and immediately effected his eſcape to the Catholics, mounted on a horſe which Mouy had preſented him. The moſt debaſed and depraved period of the Byzantine annals, when human nature ſeems to have ſunk to the loweſt ebb of degradation, ſcarcely preſents features more horrid, than the reigns of the laſt princes of Valois [106].

Maurevel.

[105] Vie de Marg. p. 31, and p. 48.

[106] Memoires de l'Etat de France, ſous Charles 9me. tome ii. p. 32. Confeſſion de Sancy, p. 511—513.

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Aſſaſſins employed by ſovereign princes.

In the extraordinary confeſſion made by Henry the Third, when king of Poland, to one of his confidents, at Cracow, relative to the cauſes of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, which is preſerved in the Memoirs of Villeroy; we read with amazement, that he himſelf, having cauſed to be brought into his preſence a Gaſcon officer, addreſſed him in theſe words: "Captain, the queen my mother and I "have ſelected you from among all our good ſervants, as a man of "valor and courage, proper to conduct and execute an enterprize "which we meditate: it only conſiſts in directing a determined blow "at a perſon whom we will name to you. Conſider, therefore, whether "you have the boldneſs to undertake it. Favor, and means, ſhall not "be wanting; and, beſides, a recompence worthy the moſt ſignal "ſervice which can be rendered us [107]." Maurevel was, notwithſtanding, afterwards, preferred, as a more cool, and tried aſſaſſin. The relation of Henry's converſation with the Gaſcon captain, is, perhaps, the only authentic record of ſuch a propoſition, made by a ſovereign to an individual, preſerved in modern hiſtory. Its enormity is augmented, when we conſider that Catherine of Medecis was preſent at, and a party to ſo deteſtable a machination. It ſeems ſcarcely poſſible to carry further, depravity and crime. The king of Navarre, when examined before the queen-dowager, and the council of ſtate, aſſembled in the Louvre, on the 18th of April, 1574, declared, that he had received certain information of the king of Poland's having ordered du Gua, to kill him at all events [108].

Confeſſion of Henry the Third.

Reflections on it.

Duke of Guiſe.

We find that Charles the Ninth, in 1570, when irritated at the duke of Guiſe's pretenſions to the hand of his ſiſter, Margaret of Valois, ordered his natural brother, the count of Angouleme, to be called, and ſaid to him: "Of thoſe two ſwords which thou ſeeſt be-"fore thee, one is deſtined for thy own execution, if to-morrow, when

[107] "Diſcours d'Henry III. a un Perſonnage d'Honneur," in the ſecond volume of the Memoires de Villeroy, p. 59-60.

[108] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 373.

"I go

"I go to the chace, thou doſt not ſtab the duke of Guiſe." The count cheerfully undertook the employment; but, he had not the courage requiſite for its execution; and the duke, by retiring from court, averted the fury of the king [109]. Lignerolles, a gentleman of the houſehold of the duke of Anjou, whoſe only crime was that of having been entruſted by his maſter, with the deſtructive intentions of Charles the Ninth reſpecting the Hugonots; was murdered in open day, by the command of his own ſovereign, while on a party of amuſement [110]. Even when expiring, in 1574, that ferocious prince, with the advice and approbation of his mother, diſpatched two famous aſſaſſins, St. Martin and Maurevel, into Poitou, on the ſpecific commiſſion to murder La Noue, one of the Proteſtant leaders, who had ſurvived the carnage of St. Bartholomew [111]. Brantome owns, that Maurevel was commonly deſigned by the appellation of "Le Tueur du Roi;" the king's murderer [112].

Lignerolles.

Henry the Third, become king of France by the deceaſe of Charles the Ninth, though leſs furious in his rage, was not reſtrained by any ſentiments of virtue, or by any principles of honor. The moſt enormous crimes found not only protection, but, encouragement from a monarch, abandoned to diſſolute pleaſures, and corrupted by examples the moſt flagitious. If he did not, like his brother, command, he ſecretly inſtigated, to their commiſſion. The count of Montſoreau, who aſſaſſinated Buſſy d'Amboiſe in 1579, was indirectly exhorted to revenge himſelf for the injuries which he had received from that inſolent favorite, by Henry himſelf. The moſt complete impunity followed the perpetration of the murder [113]. Some years before, he had ſent a detachment of his own guards, to ſieze, and drown Madame de Thorigny, a lady belonging to the

Encouragement, given by Henry the Third to crimes.

Inſtances.

[109] Vie de Marg. p. 31.
[110] Ibid. p. 48.
[111] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 55.
[112] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 165.
[113] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 90. L'Etoile, p. 37—39. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 498.

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court of his ſiſter, the queen of Navarre. She was reſcued from the hands of the aſſaſſins, at the inſtant when, having bound her, they were about to fulfil their orders [114]. To the generous delays and expoſtulations, interpoſed by Souvré, it was owing, that the order, iſſued by Henry, in 1575, to ſtrangle the marſhals Montmorenci and Coſſé, then priſoners in the Baſtile, was not inſtantly executed [115].

Henry the Third received poſitive information, that his own brother, the duke of Alenſon, had attempted to deſtroy him, by ſoliciting his valet to ſcratch him on the nape of the neck with a poiſoned pin, at the time when he was adjuſting the king's ruff [116]. Being ſoon afterwards ſuddenly ſeized with a violent and acute pain in his ear; and not doubting, that it proceeded from poiſon adminiſtered by his brother's order, or with his approbation; Henry, in a paroxiſm of rage, commanded the king of Navarre, who was afterwards Henry the Fourth, to put Alenſon to death. But, that generous and magnanimous prince, refuſed to execute the commiſſion, though it would have removed the only obſtacle to his eventually aſcending the throne of France. Henry the Third ſpeedily recovered; but, his deteſtation of the ſuppoſed author of his late attack, remained too deeply rooted, to be ever eradicated. Of theſe particulars, it is not poſſible to doubt, becauſe they depend on the teſtimony of Henry the Fourth himſelf, whoſe veracity was never impeached, even by his enemies. They convey a faithful, though a diſguſting picture, of the manners of that age [117]. The accuſation of poiſon was ſoon afterwards retorted on the king, by his brother [118]. Eteocles and Polynices, in the Theban hiſtory, were not inflamed with a more inextinguiſhable antipathy and animoſity towards each other, than were Henry the Third, and the duke of Alenſon.

[114] Vie de Marg. p. 160.

[115] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 292. Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 81, 82.

[116] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 79.

[117] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 79—81.

[118] Ibid. p. 106, 107.

The

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The chancellor Chiverny aſſures us, that in 1575, the duke of Alenſon gave directions to one of his moſt confidential captains, to aſſaſſinate him on the road from Paris to Chatelherault in Poitou: he adds, that he owed his life to the accidental circumſtance of the murderer arriving too late to execute the commiſſion [119]. It is not the only inſtance which might be produced, of that prince's guilt and criminal intentions. Even parricide did not reſtrain him, when irritated, or incenſed. Catherine of Medecis, his own mother, declared to the cardinal of Bourbon, that ſhe feared to approach her ſon's bed, on the night when La Mole, his favorite, was executed, leſt he ſhould plunge a dagger in her breaſt [120]. He was ſurpaſſed in atrocity, by his ſiſter, Margaret of Valois. De Thou poſitively aſſerts, that ſhe perſuaded and induced, by her eloquence, the celebrated baron de Vitaux to perpetrate the murder of du Gua, the favorite of Henry the Third, in 1575. The crime was rendered more deteſtable, from the cruelty with which it was accompanied. Du Gua, unarmed, and employed in reading in his bed, fell an eaſy victim to the vengeance of his implacable enemy [121]. It is a circumſtance which ought not to be omitted, becauſe it paints in all its horror, the ſavage ſpirit of the times; that, the murderer having executed the object of his commiſſion, was deſcending the ſtaircaſe, in order to effect his eſcape, when he was met by a lady, who lived in a criminal intimacy with du Gua. He had the barbarity to wipe his ſword, ſtill reeking with the blood of her lover, on the apron of the unfortunate miſtreſs [122].

Chiverny.

Du Gua. His murder.

Even though we ſhould incline to acquit the queen of Navarre of having inſtigated the aſſaſſination of du Gua; it is not poſſible to doubt of her having ſent perſons to murder a meſſenger of Henry the Third, who was on his way to Rome, with diſpatches from the

Enormities of the queen of Navarre.

[119] Memoires de Chiverny, vol. i. p. 63.
[120] Memoires de Nevers, vol. i. p. 177.
[121] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 300—302.
[122] Vie de Marg. p. 165—169. Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 58. Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 106—109.

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king to his favorite, Joyeuſe, in 1583 [123]. Indignant at ſo audacious an enterprize, executed upon a royal courier, Henry drove her from his court and capital, with public marks of ignominy. But, her future life was diſtinguiſhed, even to a late period, by a repetition of ſimilar enormities. Such was the contagion of the times, that even Henry the Fourth himſelf was not, it would ſeem, entirely free from its influence. He is accuſed, though perhaps unjuſtly, of having propoſed to the duke of Alenſon to ſtrangle Catherine of Medecis, in the Louvre, with their own hands. This propoſition is ſaid to have been made in 1574, at a time when the two princes regarded their own execution as imminent, on account of *La Mole's* conſpiracy [124]. D'Aubigné aſſerts, that the king of Navarre, incenſed againſt him for the freedom of his remonſtrances, embraced the reſolution of cauſing him to be poignarded, and thrown into the river Gave, at Pau. If there be no exaggeration in theſe facts, it may ſerve to prove how univerſal was the depravity of manners, and how difficult it was to eſcape the infection [125].

Henry the Fourth.

St. Megrin.

In 1578, St. Megrin, one of the minions of Henry the Third, was attacked and murdered, cloſe to the palace of the Louvre, by a band of aſſaſſins, whom the duke of Guiſe had employed to revenge the honor of his bed, which it was ſuppoſed St. Megrin had attempted with ſucceſs. The duke of Mayenne did not heſitate to put himſelf at the head of this troop of ruffians, and to lend his perſonal aſſiſtance in ſo foul a tranſaction [126]. Some years afterwards, in 1587, he committed an act ſtill more deteſtable, by ſtabbing Sacremore, one of his own officers and adherents, who demanded with too much warmth, the reward promiſed to his long and faithful ſervices [127]. Wherever we turn our view, we find only ſimilar crimes, and ſimilar impunity.

Sacremore.

[123] Vie de Marg. p. 342. Buſbeq. letter 22. p. 135.
[124] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 352.
[125] D'Aub. Mem. p. 62 and 63.
[126] L'Etoile, p. 30 and 31.
[127] Lettre d'Henry IV. in the tenth vol. of Voltaire, p. 231. L'Etoile, p. 106.

It

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It cannot excite ſurprize, that the nobility and people ſhould imitate the example of the ſovereign. San Pietro Ornano, a Corſican in the ſervice of France, equally renowned for his courage and his brutality; having married a Genoeſe lady of quality, whoſe rank was not inferior to her virtue, put her to death, on a pretext the moſt unjuſt. Approaching her with every external demonſtration of reſpect and humility; after entreating her pardon on his knee, he deliberately applied the cord to her neck, and ſtrangled her with his own hands. Quitting Marſeilles, where he had committed the act, he arrived at court; diſplayed his breaſt, covered with ſcars and wounds received in battle; treated the murder as a private tranſaction, with which public juſtice had no concern; and obtained his pardon from Charles the Ninth [128]. During the reſidence of Henry the Third at the caſtle of Poitiers, in 1577, a ſcene, if poſſible, ſtill more inhuman, was acted. The count de Villequier, firſt gentleman of the king's bed-chamber, and who had been his governor; having received information of his wife's infidelity, ſtabbed her at her toilet, while ſhe embraced his knees, and ſupplicated for forgiveneſs. The crime was conſidered as peculiarly indecent, from the circumſtance of its having been committed in the perſonal reſidence of the ſovereign; and no leſs deteſtable, as the unfortunate counteſs was far advanced in her pregnancy. Villequier obtained not only his immediate pardon; but, the king was accuſed of having inſtigated, or, at leaſt, approved of the murder [129]. In the long liſt of aſſaſſinations, with which the annals of that prince's reign are crouded; we find ſcarcely a ſingle inſtance of the criminal being brought to juſtice, except in the ſolitary one of La Bobettiere, a Hugonot gentleman of Poitou, who was beheaded in 1579, for having put to

Ornano. His hiſtory, and crimes.

Villequier.

Impunity of murders.

La Bobettiere.

[128] D'Aub. Hiſt. Univ. vol. i. p. 231.

[129] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 749. Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 82 and 83. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 756—758.

death

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death his wife and her lover, with circumſtances of peculiar treachery and malignity. He was beheaded in the Place de Greve, at Paris [130]. Thoſe who were not even ſecure of impunity and pardon in the court of France, found an aſylum in that of Navarre. In 1578, Laverdin having killed his rival in cold blood, was received with open arms, at Nerac [131].

Poiſon.

A crime, if poſſible, ſtill more odious, though from its nature and ſymptoms, more ambiguous and equivocal, followed in the train of aſſaſſination. Poiſon began to be known, and even to be ſtudied as a ſcience, after the commencement of the civil wars. It would be endleſs to enumerate the perſons of the higheſt condition and quality, ſuppoſed to have periſhed by this means, between the acceſſion of Francis the Second, and the concluſion of the reign of Henry the Third. Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre; Charles the Ninth; the princeſs of Condé, Mary of Cleves; the cardinal of Lorrain; Francis, duke of Alenſon; Henry, prince of Condé; marſhal Bellegarde; and a number of other illuſtrious perſonages, were believed by their contemporaries, to have been diſpatched by poiſon. Malignity and credulity invented, or exaggerated, the ſymptoms of their diſeaſes, in the majority of theſe inſtances. Counterpoiſons, preſervatives, and antidotes, were eagerly ſought after by the great, and commonly vended by the needy, or the profligate. The Bezoar ſtone was long believed to poſſeſs the virtue of expelling, or counteracting the moſt violent poiſons. Paré was among the firſt, who expoſed and confuted that pretenſion, by cauſing the Bezoar ſtone to be applied, and adminiſtered internally to a criminal, who had previouſly ſwallowed a doſe of ſublimate. The experiment was made at Clermont, in Auvergne, by order of Charles the Ninth, in 1565, to whom a Spaniſh nobleman had brought a Bezoar ſtone. The unfortunate culprit, already ſentenced to die, gladly accepted the commutation of his

[130] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 107 and 108.

[131] Ibid. p. 93.

puniſh-

puniſhment, in order to procure a chance of life. The antidote was given him almoſt immediately after the poiſon; but, ineffectually. He expired, within ſeven hours, in violent agonies; and the king, convinced by ſo inconteſtable a proof, of the inefficacy of the medicine, commanded it to be thrown into the fire [132].

Magic. The credulity of the age gave encouragement to numbers of perſons who pretended to a knowledge of magic and judicial aſtrology. The art was even reduced to rules, and privately taught as a branch of education. Study of it. D'Aubigné informs us, that while at Lyons, in 1565, being then about fifteen years old, he applied to mathematics, and to the firſt elements of magic, though with a reſolution never to avail himſelf of the latter [133]. It is difficult to gueſs what he means by "the firſt elements of magic:" they are certainly unknown in the preſent times. Ambroſe Paré, though one of the moſt enlightened men of the age in which he lived, and ſuperior to many of the vulgar ſuperſtitions, then received; yet, expreſsly admits the exiſtence of magic, and the intervention of evil ſpirits. He claſſes the magicians under their reſpective heads, enumerates many inſtances of their communication with demons; and in particular, one, to which he was an eye-witneſs, in the preſence of Charles the Ninth. These facts tend to prove how widely diffuſed, and how univerſal was that belief, in the ſixteenth century [134]. Ruggieri. Coſmo Ruggieri, the celebrated Florentine, who was ſentenced to work in the gallies, for his participation in the plot of 1574; if he did not obtain his liberty, drew, at leaſt, to himſelf, the utmoſt conſideration and reſpect, from his ſuppoſed acquaintance with magical ſecrets. Inſtead of being, like his companions, chained to the oar, he was permitted to enjoy his freedom, with only a guard of honor; and even to open a ſort of academy for judicial aſtrology in Marſeilles, which attracted pupils of every deſcription [135]. Catherine of Medecis, from her anxiety to penetrate into

[132] Œuvres de Paré, p. 506, 507.
[133] Memoires de d'Aub. p. 17.
[134] Œuvres de Paré, p. 673.
[135] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 377.

futurity,

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futurity, or, to ward off imaginary dangers, extended her protection to every pretender to occult and ſupernatural powers. The capital, and the kingdom, were inundated with them; and their credit eclipſed that of the wiſeſt, or moſt pious theologians. They were ſaid to amount, in 1572, to thirty thouſand [136]. Cabaliſtical words, or characters, were commonly worn, as preſervatives againſt ſickneſs or attack [137]. Medals, of magical virtue to produce, or, to preſerve friendſhip, were equally ſuppoſed to exiſt. We find la Mole, the favorite of the duke of Alenſon, conſtantly wearing one, which he was aſſured would perpetuate the affection of his maſter [138].

Numbers of pretenders to ſkill in magic.

Cabaliſtical words.

Charms uſed in ſurgery.

Medicine and ſurgery, profeſſions which do not ſeem to have any connexion with magic, were not leſs open to its ſuppoſed influence. "My brother," ſays Brantome, "was wounded at the ſiege of "Metz, with three balls, two in the neck, and one in the arm; of "which he would probably have died, if it had not been for the aid "of Doublet, the duke of Nemours' ſurgeon. He was regarded as "the moſt expert practitioner in France, and every one had recourſe "to him, notwithſtanding that Ambroſe Paré, ſo celebrated ſince, was "then in Metz. Doublet performed all his cures with only bandages "of clean linen, and plain water: but, to thoſe he added ſorceries, "and charmed words, as numbers of perſons now alive, who ſaw "him, can affirm [139]." When Francis, duke of Guiſe, lay without hope of life, in the royal camp before Orleans, from the conſequences of the wound inflicted by Meré Poltrot; St. Juſt d'Alegre, as Brantome informs us, undertook and offered to effect his recovery. He was brought to the duke, and propoſed to begin his dreſſings; which conſiſted in applications preciſely ſimilar to thoſe of Doublet. But, the duke, conſcious that he was beyond the reach of art, refuſed to have recourſe to an expedient which he regarded as impious. He

Death of Francis, duke of Guiſe.

[136] L'Etoile, p. 98. La Noue, p. 9.
[137] Le Lab ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 284.
[138] Ibid. vol. ii. p. 377.
[139] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 324 and 325.

did not, by any means, deſpiſe, or call in queſtion the ability of d'Alegre to reſtore him by the help of magic: he only expreſſed his readineſs rather to die, if ſuch was the will of God, than to prolong his life by enchantments. Brantome declares, that he was preſent at the circumſtance [140]. In 1582, Sancho d'Avila, one of the moſt renowned captains of the ſixteenth century, died of a wound, which might have been eaſily healed by ſkilful applications. But, having had recourſe to charms and ſorcery, he fell into a languiſhing diſeaſe, of which he expired [141]. CHAP. VI. D'Avila.

Ambroſe Paré relates many ſimilar inſtances to which he was a witneſs, and which he expoſed to public deriſion, in the manner that ſuch impoſtures merited. During the ſiege of Metz, in 1552, he was ſent to viſit a gentleman, whoſe leg had been fractured by a cannon ball. "I found him," ſays Paré, "in bed, his leg crooked and bent, with-"out any dreſſing on it, becauſe a perſon had promiſed to cure him, "by only uſing certain words, taking his name and belt. He had "lain during four days in exquiſite pain, neither ſleeping by day or "night, crying piteouſly. I laughed at the pretended mode of cure, "and immediately dreſſed his leg. He recovered, and is now "alive [142]." The moſt curious recital of this kind, is to be found in another part of Paré's works. "At the ſiege of Heſdin, in 1553, the count de Martigues, a nobleman of the higheſt diſtinction, received a ball in the lungs, of which he languiſhed, with mortal ſymptoms. Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, who commanded the Spaniſh forces, exerted every endeavour to prolong his life, and cauſed him to be attended by the moſt eminent ſurgeons of the two armies, after the ſurrender of Heſdin. But, the wound was incurable. When it had been ſo pronounced by Paré, and all the other practitioners, a Spaniard preſented himſelf, and engaged, on pain of death, to operate his recovery, provided that neither ſurgeon, apothecary, nor phyſician, Count of Martigues.

[140] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 113 and 114.

[141] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 599.

[142] Œuvres de Paré, p. 787.

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were permitted to approach his patient. They were inſtantly diſmiſſed; and the duke of Savoy ſent a gentleman to notify to Paré, that, as he valued his own life, he ſhould not preſume to interfere further with the count de Martigues. He gladly obeyed; conſcious that no efforts of art could effect the cure. The Spaniard, then advancing, thus addreſſed his patient: "My Lord, the duke of Savoy "has commanded me to come and dreſs thy wound. I ſwear to "thee, by God, that, within eight days, I will enable thee to mount "on horſeback, lance in hand; provided that no other perſon ap-

Mode, uſed for his cure.

"proach thee, except myſelf. Thou ſhalt eat and drink every thing "which is to thy taſte: I will perform abſtinence for thee; and of "this, thou may'ſt be aſſured, on my promiſe. I have cured many, "who had worſe wounds than thine." The noblemen preſent, anſwered: "May God give thee grace!" He then deſired to have a ſhirt of the count de Martigues, which he tore into little ſhreds, in form of croſſes, mumbling, and muttering certain words upon the wounds. Having dreſſed them, the Spaniard permitted him to eat and drink whatever he choſe; repeating, that he would obſerve the requiſite regimen in his ſtead. He did ſo, only eating ſix ſmall plumbs, and ſix bits of bread at his meals, and drinking ſimply beer. Nevertheleſs, two days afterwards, count Martigues

His death.

died; and the Spaniard, ſeeing him in the agony, made off with the utmoſt expedition. I believe, if he had been caught, the duke of Savoy would have ordered him to be ſtrangled[143]." Nothing can more ſtrongly diſplay the ignorance, credulity, and unacquaintance of the age with the principles of medicine, than their committing to bold and obſcure empirics, the care of perſons in extremity, when abandoned as hopeleſs by regular practitioners.

During the ſiege of Jametz by the duke of Lorrain, in 1588, almoſt all the priſoners who fell into the governor's hands, were found to have about their bodies, cabaliſtical words, or prayers, written on vel-

[143] Œuvres de Paré, p. 792.

lum,

lum. They were believed to poſſeſs the virtue of protecting the wearer from wounds, or ſhot [144]. Brantome ſays, that he had known an infinite number of perſons, who wore ſuch charms: "with ſome," adds he, "they ſucceeded; with others, they had no effect [145]." As there were protecting, ſo there were deſtructive charms. Small waxen images, pricked, or pierced about the heart, with magical words and ceremonies, were ſuppoſed to produce death. Such having been found in the houſe of la Mole, which, it was aſſerted, he had procured from Ruggieri, in order to accelerate the progreſs and final effect of the diſeaſe, under which Charles the Ninth laboured; the unfortunate culprit did not deny, that they were magical images: but, he maintained, that their virtue was to excite love, and not to deſtroy life. He appealed to the teſtimony of the figures themſelves, which were female; and proteſted his innocence. The court did not the leſs condemn him to expiate his imprudence on a ſcaffold [146].

Deſtructive charms. Waxen images.

During the frenzy of the Pariſians, and their hatred againſt Henry the Third, after the aſſaſſination of the Guiſes, in 1589; they had recourſe to ſorcery, in order to rid themſelves of a prince, whom they conſidered as a tyrant. Their profane and impious rage was ſo great, that even the prieſts did not ſcruple to place upon the altars, images, which, at every maſs, they pricked; accompanied with incantations and invocations to deſtroy the king. Magical torches were extinguiſhed, with ſimilar ceremonies [147]. The chiefs of the League employed a more effectual inſtrument; the knife of Clement. Such was the credulity of the populace, that two candleſticks of coſtly workmanſhip, and ornamented with the figures of ſatyrs, which had belonged to Henry; were produced and ſhewn to the audience by one of the popular preachers, as the demons whom he was accuſtomed to invoke. The impoſture, however groſs, was not the leſs

Magical torches.

Credulity of the Pariſians.

[144] De Thou, vol. x. p. 226. [145] Brant. Les Duels, p. 90.
[146] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 378 and 379. Mem. de Nevers, vol. i. p. 73—75.
[147] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 270.

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ſucceſsful [148]. So much had the licentiouſneſs of the times produced impunity, that ſorcery became, under the two laſt princes of Valois, a profeſſion, exerciſed without apprehenſion or diſguiſe. We find, notwithſtanding, that, in 1587, an Italian, named Dominique Miraille, ſeventy years of age, and his mother-in-law, were hanged, and their bodies conſumed to aſhes, before the church of "Notre "Dame," at Paris, for the pretended crime of magic. The puniſhment excited aſtoniſhment, not from its injuſtice or abſurdity, but, becauſe it was novel and ſingular [149].

Horoſcopes.

Horoſcopes, and calculations of nativity, were ſo common, that it was uſual to draw them on the birth of all princes and ſovereigns. The predictions of Michael of Salon, known more univerſally, under the name of Noſtradamus; were peculiarly celebrated in the ſixteenth century. They were read and ſtudied with the moſt implicit credulity; and as, like all oracular writings, they were couched in dark and ambiguous expreſſions, men ſaw, or fancied that they ſaw in them, every event which afterwards took place. Jerome Cardan, who died at Rome in 1576, had filled Italy and Europe, with his aſtrological fame. The merit of his other writings, however eminent, was loſt in that of his calculations. He had even the abſurd impiety to draw the horoſcope of Jeſus Chriſt, and to ſubject him to the chimerical laws, or motions of the celeſtial bodies, by which he explained, and to which he referred, every ſublunary event [150]. The moſt philoſophic and enlightened minds of that period, were not altogether ſuperior to theſe vain and viſionary ſtudies. Aſtronomy and mathematics were implicated with aſtrology; and ſciences the moſt ſolid, lent their aid to ſuſtain ignorance and fiction. We may ſee in many parts of the hiſtory of de Thou, that he had not been able to reſiſt ſo general an infection [151]. La Noue, though he treats the ſtudy and

Calculations of Noſtradamus.

Univerſality of a belief in predictions.

[148] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 272 and 273.

[149] Ibid. p. 218.

[150] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 362.

[151] Ibid. p. 134; vol. x. p. 215, and p. 667.

practice

practice of magic, or aſtrology, as deteſtable, ſpeaks of it as not the leſs real and unqueſtionable [152]. Comets and meteors, or phenomena of the Heavens, which our knowledge of aſtronomy enables us to explain, or to view without apprehenſion; ſpread terror over whole kingdoms, and alarmed princes, who conſidered them as preſages of their own approaching diſſolution [153]. Catherine of Medecis was, during her whole life, the victim of her apprehenſions; and avoided with anxious ſolicitude, every place, where ſhe fancied that her deſtiny awaited her [154]. De Thou aſſures us, that having been admoniſhed "to diſtruſt St. Germain," ſhe never could be induced to make other than a ſhort ſtay at the royal caſtle of that name; which ſhe quitted precipitately, on the firſt ſymptoms of indiſpoſition. She even carried her alarms to ſuch a point, that the palace of the Louvre being ſituated in the pariſh of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, ſhe abandoned it; and conſtructed a palace for herſelf, at a vaſt expence, in another quarter of the capital. De Thou betrays his own conviction of the reality of the fact, by acquainting us that the prediction was accompliſhed at her death, becauſe a theologian of the name of St. Germain, was called in to aſſiſt her in her laſt moments [155].

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Comets. Terror produced by them.

Catherine of Medecis.

Compacts with the evil ſpirit, whom we denominate the devil, were regarded as not only poſſible, but, common. The confeſſions of ignorant and credulous, or timid and ſuperſtitious wretches, who avowed ſuch pretended communications, were conſidered even by the magiſtrates, as juridical proofs, and puniſhed with exemplary ſeverity [156]. The profeſſion of a demoniac, was at once lucrative and celebrated. The perſons, ſelected for perſonating the part, were uſually women of obſcure extraction, ignorant, and afflicted with violent nervous diſorders, by which they were convulſed in a frightful manner. Theſe fits were miſtaken by the credulous, or ſuperſtitious ſpec-

Compacts with evil ſpirits.

Demoniacs.

[152] La Noue, p. 8—11.

[153] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 593, Brant. vol. iv. Cap. Fran. p. 22.

[154] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 639; vol. x. p. 502.

[155] De Thou, vol. x. p. 502.

[156] La Noue, p. 9.

tators,

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Nicola Aubry.

tators, for the infallible proofs of demoniacal poſſeſſion. In 1565, a young woman of Vervins, in Picardy, named Nicola Aubry, and known in hiſtory by the title of "the Demoniac of Laön," was believed to be poſſeſſed by no leſs a number of devils than thirty. Three of the moſt refractory, who could not be expelled by any ordinary exorciſms, were publickly compelled to evacuate their tenement, in preſence of a prodigious multitude, aſſembled on the occaſion. The ſcene of the deception; for ſuch, it can only be eſteemed; was the cathedral of the city of Laön, where Nicola Aubry was exhibited on a theatre, expreſsly conſtructed to facilitate the view of the ceremony. She appears to have received a complete cure [157].

Other inſtances.

About ten years afterwards, in 1575, a woman of the looſeſt life and moſt abandoned manners, was ſelected by marſhal Fervaques, as a proper ſubject for pretended poſſeſſion. She was inſtructed by the prieſt of the village of Bellouet, near Liſieux, in Normandy, how to act the part; and her deliverance from the ſuppoſed power of the infernal ſpirit, was magnified into a ſpecies of miracle. The ſhrine, before which this ſpiritual interpoſition was performed, became ſo famous, as to draw to it an incredible number of votaries, devotees, and pilgrims, from every part of France. It is hardly credible, that in the ſhort ſpace of three years, near eighty houſes, and fifty inns, for the reception and entertainment of thoſe pious ſtrangers, were conſtructed at Bellouet. When we conſider the pecuniary advantages, which muſt have reſulted from the concourſe of ſuch gueſts, we ſhall no longer wonder at the frequency and repetition of the impoſture [158].

It was generally ſuppoſed in the ſixteenth century, that inviſible beings, or demons, practiſed upon human weakneſs, aſſumed the ſhape of men and women, and under that form, might have the moſt intimate and criminal communication with perſons of either ſex. Fancy and terror amuſed themſelves by decorating and perſonifying the

[157] Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 180, 181.

[158] Ibid. p. 171, 172, and p. 180.

creatures,

creatures, which they had originally invented. The Succubus, and the Incubus, were not only believed to exiſt, by the vulgar: men of the deepeſt learning, and of the moſt acute talents, equally regarded them as real. "The Incubus," ſays Ambroſe Paré, "are demons, "who transform themſelves into the ſhape of men, and cohabit with "ſorcereſſes. The Succubus are demons, who, in like manner, "aſſume the appearance of women [159]." He cites, or relates examples of the fact. But, in another place, he ſeems only to conſider them as a ſpecies of the night-mare [160]. His underſtanding, and his prejudices, were evidently at variance, and left him under a degree of uncertainty and indeciſion. CHAP. VI. The Incubus, and Succubus.

The nuptial couch was, in like manner, believed to be invaded by ſupernatural agents, or rendered ſterile, by the operation of ſorcery and magic. Numerous inſtances of this opinion might be produced, if the nature of the ſubject did not render it improper. Paré not only owns and maintains the exiſtence of ſuch charms and ſpells, as would debilitate, and incapacitate for the functions of marriage; but, he declaims againſt them and their authors, in the moſt forcible language. He declares the perſons, capable of having recourſe to ſuch diabolical arts, in order to fruſtrate the purpoſes of wedlock, enemies of God and man. Overborne by the univerſality of the belief, and deceived by ſome equivocal, or doubtful examples, he did not permit himſelf to examine, whether they might not either be wholly fictitious, or, the natural reſult of phyſical cauſes. Montaigne is far more philoſophical in his opinions on the ſubject, though at the expence of decency [161]. Nuptial ſpells.

Familiar ſpirits obtained equal belief, not only among the vulgar; but, among people of every deſcription [162]. Catherine of Medecis conſulted Simeoni, an aſtrologer, on the choice of a happy and auſpicious day for Charles the Ninth's inauguration [163]. Papyre Maſſon

159 Œuvres de Paré, p. 672.
160 Ibid. p. 675, 676.
161 Ibid. p. 676. Montaigne, Eſſays, chap. xx. p. 120—136.
162 Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 325.
163 Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 102.

aſſures

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Celebrity and vogue of Noſtradamus.

aſſures us, that Noſtradamus having drawn his horoſcope, predicted that his reign would be ſanguinary and unfortunate [164]. It is certain that Henry the Second ſent that aſtrologer to Blois, in order to aſcertain the deſtinies of his children. In the four lines, compoſed by Noſtradamus, and which were conſidered as prophetic, or deſcriptive of Henry the Second's death by the lance of Montgomery, it is impoſſible to diſcover any thing, except a vague and fanciful alluſion to a combat between two lions, in which one of them loſes his eyes.

Prediction of Henry the Second's death.

But, as the imagination of his contemporaries was ſtruck with the ſudden and deplorable cataſtrophé of that monarch, which was the ſignal of the calamities of France; they eagerly ſeized on any caſual reſemblance between the verſes of Noſtradamus, and the fate of the French prince [165]. Ronſard, tho' he doubts of the ſource from which Noſtradamus derived his prophetic powers, and leaves it undetermined whether the Deity, or the demon, inſpired him in his predictions; yet, profeſſes his perfect conviction of the ſupernatural aſſiſtance extended to that impoſtor [166].

Spells.

Margaret of Valois, like her mother Catherine, was immerſed in magical purſuits and ſtudies. She is deſcribed by a lady of her own houſehold, in 1573, as Canidia is in Horace, ſurrounded with ſpells, and invoking the aid of ſupernatural beings. A ſpy, placed by Charles the Ninth, about his ſiſter, writes to him: "The queen of "Navarre has been three days ſhut up, with only three of her women. "One of them holds the two-edged ſword; another, the paſte; and "a third, the iron. She is conſtantly in water, and burning incenſe "like a ſorcereſs [167]." Such were the occupations of the human mind in that age.

Margaret of Valois.

La Broſſe. His predictions to Sully.

Sully founded his inviolable adherence to the king of Navarre, among other reaſons, upon the poſitive aſſurances of la Broſſe, his

[164] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 21.
[165] Biograph. Dict. art. "Noſtradamus," vol. ix. p. 535.
[166] Œuvres de Ronſard, tom. ix. p. 36, 37.
[167] Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. Recherches, p. 102.

preceptor,

preceptor, who early revealed to him, that the deſtinies had decreed the elevation of that prince to the throne of France. Nay, la Broſſe had, by his art, aſcertained, that, as Henry and Sully were both born on St. Lucia's day, they would be inſeparably attached to each other, during their whole lives. Sully made no ſecret of ſo pleaſing a piece of intelligence to his maſter; who, on his part, owned to him, that an aſtrologer, having calculated the nativity of the duke of Alenſon, had, not without extreme reluctance, denounced to that prince, a premature and inglorious end; while he had acquainted him, that the crown of France was reſerved for the king of Navarre. Sully lays the ſcene of this converſation as early as 1580, at a time when the events foretold, were only, at moſt, probable [168]. It is certain, that a general opinion prevailed throughout France, during the reign of Henry the Third, that the ſceptre would paſs into the family of Vendome, or Bourbon [169]. This expectation was founded on more ſolid foundations, however, than horoſcopes and nativities. The debaucheries of Henry the Third, and of his brother, the duke of Alenſon: the virtue, and the ſterility of Louiſa, wife to the former prince: the preceding deceaſe of Francis the Second, and Charles the Ninth, without male iſſue: and the heroic, or amiable qualities of the young king of Navarre: theſe circumſtances when combined, operated forcibly on the minds of the nation, and attracted their attention towards the event, which took place by the aſſaſſination of Henry the Third, in 1589.

Expectation of the extinction of the houſe of Valois, general.

The tranſmutation of metals, and the diſcovery of the philoſopher's ſtone, was another of the characteriſtic purſuits of that credulous age. Brantome informs us, that Caſtelnau de Mauviſſiere, a French gentleman of diſtinction, defrauded Emanuel Philibert, duke of Savoy, of above fifty thouſand crowns, in the proſecution of the reſearch [170]. We may ſee the implicit faith lent to the aſſu-

Tranſmutation of metals.

[168] Sully, vol. i. p. 31—33.
[169] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 242.
[170] Brant. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 112.

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Alchymists. Grantrye.

rances of these alchymists, in the depositions of the principal persons concerned in the conspiracy of 1574. Grantrye, who had been the embassador of Charles the Ninth to the Grisons, was to have been appointed superintendant of the finances of the duke of Alenson, "because he promised by his art, to convert silver into gold, and by "that expedient to pay the duke's army [171]." It is true, that he stipulated at the same time for his retreat into Switzerland, where he was to produce the transmutation. Grantrye being examined before commissioners named for the purpose, declared, that, "while he was "resident among the Grisons, he had employed himself in distil- "ling and transmuting metals; that he was possessed of the secret, "which he would not communicate to any one except the king, or "those whom his majesty should please to name. He added, that "he could produce a million of crowns every year; the king only "depositing fifty thousand crowns in silver, in order to gain five hun- "dred thousand, annually; and that the profit might be drawn out "monthly, or even weekly, if it was thought proper [172]." These pretensions, added to some interest at court, exempted Grantrye from the fate of his associates, who perished on the scaffold [173]. It would be easy to select many similar proofs of the belief given to pretenders to chymical secrets.

His offers.

Pilgrimages.

Pilgrimages were in the highest vogue under Henry the Third, who, as well as the queen his wife, had recourse to them, with a view to obtain issue. In 1579, he made a journey of this nature, to the shrine of the virgin, at Chartres, which had attained an extraordinary reputation in cases of sterility. In order to assist the effect of his prayers, he received, likewise, two shirts, denominated from their virtues, "Chemises de notre Dame," which he carried to Paris, for the queen and himself. They were commonly esteemed infallible re-

Shirts of our Lady.

[171] Le Lab. sur Cast. vol. ii. p. 376.
[172] Ibid. p. 368.
[173] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 54.

cipés.

cipés [174]. As they proved, however, of no effect, the king, after making vows to various ſaints, invoking their aid or interceſſion; in November, 1582, had recourſe to "our Lady of Lieſſe" in Champagne, who was ſuppoſed to preſide over, and to ſhed her benediction, in an eſpecial degree, upon the nuptial couch. He went thither as a pilgrim [175]. Louiſa of Vaudemont ſtill continuing without iſſue, their majeſties repaired twice in the following year, to the virgin at Chartres. Supplications having been found ineffectual alone, they next tried the force of preſents on her. An image of ſilver gilt, repreſenting the virgin herſelf, and weighing a hundred marks, was offered by them [176]. They continued nine days in devotion; and repeated the experiment ſome months afterwards, when they preſented a lamp of ſilver, weighing forty marks, together with lands to the amount of above twenty pounds ſterling annual rent, for the purpoſe of keeping it alive, day and night [177]. As the virgin perſiſted to reject the royal ſupplications, we find the king, in 1584, going with forty-ſeven companions, all on foot, and in the habit of penitents, to Chartres, and to Clery, another celebrated ſhrine [178].

Remedies for ſterility.

Preſents to the virgin.

By a profanation, which ſtrongly characterizes the manners of that diſſolute age, religion was made a vehicle for coquetry; and relics were worn by ladies, in order to counteract the ravages of time, or to renovate the attractions of beauty. It is not without aſtoniſhment, that we can reflect on the uſe to which ſome of them were applied. D'Aubigné aſſures us, that the maids of honor belonging to Catherine of Medecis, expreſſed the utmoſt anxiety to redeem from the ſacrilegious hands of the count de la Rochefoucault, a Hugonot, the girdle of St. Catherine of Sienna. It was kept at Tours, from whence the Proteſtants carried it off during the civil wars, under Charles the

[174] L'Etoile, p. 35.
[175] Buſbeq. letters the 5th and 9th.
[176] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 136.
[177] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 144.
[178] Ibid. p. 175.

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Ninth. Its virtue was of a ſingular, and precious kind; far ſurpaſſing any of the empyrical remedies, ſo common in the preſent time. It was fondly believed by thoſe who uſed it, that it could reſtore to the moſt beautiful part of the female form, its original lovelineſs, when loſt by the effects of age and diſeaſe[179]. The ceſtus of the Queen of Love, ſo famous in antiquity, was not more powerful.

Jubilees.

Deſpairing of effectual relief from any application of his own to the virgin, Henry had recourſe, in 1582, to the ſovereign pontiff, and demanded the publication of a jubilee, in order to procure him offſpring. Gregory the Thirteenth, who, as we may ſee in the letters and diſpatches of de Foix, the French embaſſador; was frequently very inflexible on eccleſiaſtical or pecuniary matters; expreſſed the utmoſt readineſs to oblige the French monarch on this point. He even offered, voluntarily, to join his own entreaties and prayers, to thoſe of the king and the nation. To render them more beneficial, the third week in Lent was ſelected, as peculiarly fitted for pious mortification; and the bull, promulgated for the purpoſe, enjoined every ſubject of France to unite in fervent addreſſes to Heaven[180]. In 1588, at the convocation of the States General, the archbiſhop of Bourges, as preſident of the clergy, obſerved in his harangue to the three orders, that "they ought all to implore of the "Divine goodneſs to withdraw from the royal houſe, the opprobrium "of barrenneſs; to caſt a favorable look upon the perſon of the "queen, as he had formerly done upon Anne, the mother of Samuel; "and to grant the king a numerous poſterity to inherit his do-"minions[181]." It would ſeem that the "ſhirts of our Lady" were apprehended to diffuſe a protecting, as well as a generative virtue over their wearers; for Brantome gravely diſcuſſes, whether a champion going to engage in a judicial combat, might, or might not, be allowed to wear one of them. He treats them as a ſpecies of

Harangue of the archbiſhop of Bourges.

Efficacy of charms.

[179] Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 205.

[180] Lettres de Foix, p. 252 and 258, lettre 28.

[181] De Thou, vol. x. p. 396.

charm,

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charm, or pious magic; and he concludes by declaring, that if one of the combatants be permitted to avail himſelf of their aſſiſtance, the advantage ſhould be rendered common to both [182]. So little progreſs had the human mind made, at the cloſe of the ſixteenth century, even among men of liberality, rank, and education.

Impediments to travelling.

We may naturally ſuppoſe, that during a period ſo agitated by every calamity of civil and of religious diſſenſion, the intercourſe from one part of the kingdom to another, muſt have been difficult, perilous, and interrupted. Poſts, and poſt-horſes, were, indeed, eſtabliſhed throughout France; but, the impediments to travelling were, nevertheleſs, very conſiderable. All communication with foreign countries, was frequently ſtopped by order of government, in time of profound peace; nor were even letters and couriers allowed to paſs, or ſecure from arreſt and inſpection [183]. Henry the Second appointed Bruſquet, his buffoon, poſt-maſter of Paris, which was a very lucrative employment. Brantome informs us, that he had commonly near a hundred horſes ſtanding ready for uſe, in the ſtables. It appears, likewiſe, that the price paid by foreigners for them, was one-fifth part higher, than that given by Frenchmen [184]. No aſſertions, however poſitive, can ever perſuade us, that the intelligence of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew was carried from Paris to Madrid, in three days and three nights. Yet, Brantome, a contemporary, declares it in terms the moſt preciſe, and relates every circumſtance attending the reception of the news by Philip the Second [185]. The weſtern, and ſouthern provinces, in which lay the principal ſtrength of the Hugonots; and where, of conſequence, even during the intervals of civil war, the inhabitants remained always on the watch; were, in fact, hardly to be paſſed without an eſcort. Epernon, who was ſent from Bourdeaux, with diſpatches to Henry the Third at Blois, in 1576, with difficulty found means to penetrate through the interme-

Poſts. Their eſtabliſhment.

Difficulty of paſſing from one part of France, to another.

[182] Brant. Les Duels, p. 90.
[183] Buſbeq. letter 8, and letter 15.
[184] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etran. p. 289.
[185] Ibid. vol. iii. Cap. Fran. p. 169.

diate

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diate country, which owned neither ſovereign, nor laws, nor police [186]. D'Aubigné, when diſpatched by the king of Navarre to the ſame prince in 1584, during a period of nominal tranquillity; yet was ſo apprehenſive of being attacked, or plundered, on the road, that he did not venture to carry with him his maſter's commiſſion. Having cauſed it to be copied, he took only the duplicate, leaving the original in his own houſe [187].

Banditti, and outlaws.

The frontiers were infeſted by troops of outlaws and banditti, whom perſecution had driven to ſeek ſubſiſtence among the mountains or defiles of Savoy and Germany. It was unſafe even for embaſſadors, or men of the higheſt quality, to venture beyond the limits of France, unleſs protected by an armed force. In 1575, Pibrac, on his embaſſy to Poland, from Henry the Third, was beſet by a band of robbers near Montbelliard; his equipage was plundered, two of his attendants were murdered, and he narrowly eſcaped with his life [188]. Henry, prince of Condé, ſome years afterwards, returning from Geneva into Dauphiné, was, in like manner, ſtopped and pillaged by ruffians, who, ignorant of his rank, did not detain his perſon [189]. It is, notwithſtanding, certain, that the northern and eaſtern provinces of the kingdom enjoyed, at intervals, a comparative ſerenity; and that travelling was not only ſafe, but, commodious, in thoſe diſtricts. We may ſee with what ſafety, and even convenience, Montaigne travelled in 1580, through Champagne, from La Fere, in Picardy, to Plombieres, in Lorrain; as well as in the following year, from Lyons, acroſs all the interior provinces, to his caſtle on the Dordogne, in Perigord. He ſeems to have neither ſuffered hardſhip, nor apprehended danger; tho' it is evident that his attendants were few, and only ſuch as every man of condition would carry with him on a journey [190]. It would probably have been difficult, even before the late revolution in

Their numbers.

Facility of travelling in ſome provinces.

Inns, and accommodations.

[186] Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 26.
[187] Memoires d'Aub. p. 98.
[188] De Thou, vol. vii. p. 276.
[189] Mezerai, vol. ix. p. 228.
[190] Montaigne, Voyages, vol. i. p. 1—23; and vol. iii. p. 452—460.

1789,

1789, to have diſcovered at Chalons on the Marne, ſo good an inn as Montaigne found in that town, above two centuries earlier, in 1580. "We lodged," ſays he, "at the Crown, which is a handſome houſe, "and they ſerve in ſilver plate: the greater part of the beds and "coverlids are of ſilk[191]." This deſcription, and ſome others, may tend to make us doubt, whether, in the parts of France where civil war had not baniſhed the arts and comforts of life, accommodations, and places of reception for travellers, were greatly inferior to thoſe found in the preſent age. Montaigne appears to have performed the journey on his own horſes; and to have been accompanied or followed by mules for his ſervants and baggage[192]. CHAP. VI.

Among the diſorders frequent during the period under our review, and whoſe ravages were peculiarly deſtructive, muſt be reckoned the plague. That ſcourge of the human race ſeemed to have ſucceeded to the leproſy, which the Cruzaders had brought from the coaſts of Syria, as early as the twelfth century. It is clear, that France was ſcarcely ever altogether free from peſtilential diſeaſes; ſometimes lurking in the provinces, among the poor inhabitants of obſcure towns; ſometimes laying waſte the capital, and extending their fatal effects over the whole kingdom. No wiſe and vigilant precautions, ſuch as are adopted by modern ſtates, were taken to prevent its entrance, or to arreſt its progreſs. The inſalubrity of cities, the want of air, cleanlineſs, and police, contributed to nouriſh or perpetuate it, among the inferior orders of people. To that claſs, were uſually confined its principal attacks, though it ſometimes entered the houſes of the great, and the palaces of kings. In 1562, thirty thouſand perſons were carried off by the plague, in the city of Orleans alone[193]. We ſhall not wonder at ſo vaſt a mortality, when we conſider, that the infected were heaped together in rooms, where they communicated the malady to each other. D'Aubigné ſays, that at Orleans, the

Diſtempers. The plague.

Want of police, and precautions.

Numbers, carried off by it.

[191] Montaigne, Voyages, vol. i. p. 12.
[192] Ibid. p. 3.
[193] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 11.

ſurgeon,

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ſurgeon, and four other perſons of the family, died in the chamber where he himſelf lay at the point of death, of the ſame contagious diſeaſe [194]. The plague of 1580, was the moſt memorable and deſtructive of any which took place under Henry the Third. We may ſee in de Thou, all the ſymptoms by which it was preceded and accompanied. In the beginning of June, a diſtemper manifeſted itſelf at Paris, which he denominates "La Coqueluche," or, the hooping cough; but, which, if we may judge from his deſcription, was far more ſerious than the diſorder ſo termed in the preſent age.

Hooping cough.

Deſcription of it.

"It ſhewed itſelf," ſays he, "by an aching at the extremity of the "back-bone; by a ſhivering, followed with heavineſs in the head; "and by weakneſs in all the limbs, joined with a violent pain in the "breaſt. If ſuch as were affected with it, were not cured by the "fourth or fifth day, the malady degenerated into fever, which almoſt "always carried off the patient. Thoſe who neglected the diſorder, "did well: on the contrary, ſuch as were either bled or purged, ge-"nerally died [195]." Henry the Third himſelf, the duke of Guiſe, and many of the firſt nobility, were attacked with this diſtemper, which was immediately followed by the plague [196].

Plague at Paris. Its ravages.

"There never," ſays de Thou, "was ſeen a finer autumn, nor a "greater abundance of every ſort of fruit; inſomuch that the conta-"gion was believed to proceed, rather from the influence of the ſtars, "than from a corruption of the air [197]."—"The plague carried off, in "about ſix months, forty thouſand perſons, of whom the greater "number conſiſted of the loweſt of the people. It rendered Paris "almoſt deſert; and the houſes of the rich, whom fear had induced "to fly from the capital, were in great danger of being pillaged by "robbers, who, during the nights, armed themſelves, infeſted the "ſtreets, and committed diſorders with impunity. All the vigilance

[194] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 11.
[195] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 401 and 402.
[196] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 117.
[197] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 401 and 402.

"of

" of the provoſt of the merchants, aided by the magiſtrates, was " ſcarcely effectual to repreſs their outrages [198]." The king, after firſt retiring to St. Maur, only a league from the metropolis; withdrew precipitately to Blois, in order to ſecure himſelf from infection. In this criſis, the intrepid and magnanimous conduct of Chriſtopher de Thou, firſt preſident of the parliament of Paris, and father to the celebrated hiſtorian, juſt cited, eminently conduced to preſerve that city from complete anarchy and deſolation. Though he was arrived at a very advanced period of life, and was accuſtomed annually to repair to his country-houſe during the autumnal ſeaſon; he refuſed to conſult either his own ſafety, eaſe, or gratification, at the expence of his public duty. He even appeared every day in his coach, in the ſtreets, to convince the people how much he deſpiſed the danger, and to animate them by his example. We muſt own, that ſuch a character would not have diſgraced the conſular ages of Rome.

Magnanimity of the preſident de Thou.

Precautions and exertions, for diminiſhing the violence of the contagion, ſeem to have been made by the magiſtrates of Paris, in 1580. An officer, intitled from his functions, the provoſt of health, was created, who cauſed the ſick to be tranſported to hoſpitals, where they appeared to be unable to procure proper aſſiſtance in their own houſes. Tents were pitched without the walls, for their reception; and a contribution for ſupporting theſe extraordinary expences, was raiſed upon the inhabitants [199]. Malvedy, mathematical inſtructor to the king, and who poſſeſſed an equal knowledge of medicine, undertook to attend the diſeaſed; but, it does not ſeem to have been with any eminent ſucceſs. The peſtilence raged for ſix months, and diminiſhed as the winter approached. It is not unworthy of remark, that ſo awful a viſitation of Providence, far from amending, rather augmented the depravity of manners, among the people. Such was the ſolitude and depopulation of the capital, that the tradeſmen not

Exertions made to check its progreſs.

Diſſolution of manners, produced by it.

[198] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 400. Œuvres de Paré, p. 568.

[199] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 118.

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only played at bowls upon the bridge of "Notre Dame," and in the great hall where the courts of law were accuſtomed to be held; but, games of chance and tables for play were eſtabliſhed in the ſtreets [200]. A circumſtance very ſimilar is related by Boccace, relative to the effect of the great peſtilence, in 1348, upon the manners of the Florentines [201]. Almoſt all the towns and villages in the vicinity of Paris, caught the infection. At Laön, in Picardy, it was ſo violent, as to carry off ſix thouſand perſons [202].

Re-appearance of the plague.

Notwithſtanding theſe deſtructive ravages, ſo little had the malignity of the diſtemper ceaſed, or ſo inattentive were the magiſtrates to effect its total extinction, that we find it re-appearing in the capital and in the provinces, during the greater part of the years 1583, and 1584. One of the ladies of the queen's houſehold having been ſeized with it, and carried off ſuddenly at Blois, the court fled to St. Germain [203]. We may ſee in the Memoirs of Sully, what havoc was made by the plague in that age, and what terror it inſpired [204]. In 1587, having obtained permiſſion to viſit his wife, who had remained at Roſny; he learnt on his arrival, that the greater part of the inhabitants of the town were already dead of the plague; and that in the caſtle, where ſhe reſided, two of her women, and three of her domeſtics, had been carried off by the ſame malady. Such was the violence of the contagion, that ſhe was reduced to quit the caſtle, and to remain two days and two nights in the adjoining foreſt, in her coach, as no perſon would open their houſe for her reception. "I found "her lodged," ſays he, "in a caſtle named Huets, lent her by my "aunt, Madame de Campagnac, with no other attendants, than one "young lady, a maid-ſervant, a coachman, and a lacquey. When I "arrived, ſhe repeatedly refuſed to open the gates; imploring me

Account given of it by Sully.

[200] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 119. Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 67.

[201] Decameron, vol. i. p. iv. Preface.

[202] De Thou, vol. viii. p. 400. Lettres de Foix, p. 46.

[203] Buſbeq. letters 20. 22. 27. and 43.

[204] Sully, vol. i. p. 34.

"from

" from a window, with her hands claſped, and tears in her eyes, not " to approach her for at leaſt a month." Sully's affection and impatience ſurmounted, notwithſtanding, his terrors, and induced him to enter the caſtle [205].

It is difficult for the imagination to conceive a picture more terrible, or affecting, than that drawn by Paré, in his medical works, of the plague. He had been converſant with it, and preſent at its ravages, throughout a long life. He deſcribes its operation on the human mind, on ſociety, and on the affections of the heart, in colors the moſt glowing and awful. All the charities, ties, and connexions of life, ſeemed to diſappear and extinguiſh before it. Far from extending aid to thoſe who were attacked by its malignant ſymptoms, they were inſtantly abandoned, or driven out to periſh, by their own neareſt relatives. The terror of receiving the infection ſurmounted every other emotion, and ſteeled to pity the moſt benevolent, or generous minds. Populous cities became ſuddenly deſert; and every habitation was ſhut, or quitted, by its owners. Bands of deſperate malefactors, or robbers, availing themſelves of the general conſternation, entered the houſes of the dying, plundered their effects, and even accelerated their end, by ſtrangling them in their beds [206]. It would be incredible, if we did not know the fact from the ſame inconteſtable authority, that theſe wretches even endeavoured to ſpread the peſtilential and malignant influence of the diſtemper, by beſmearing the doors and window-ſhutters of thoſe houſes where the infection had not hitherto penetrated, with the virulent and infectious matter, taken from the bodies of perſons already dead of the plague. The preſence of Charles the Ninth himſelf did not reſtrain, or prevent, theſe flagitious enormities, at Lyons, in 1565 [207]. No ſpiritual aſſiſtance could be procured for the ſick; but, in the houſes of the opulent, a ſurgeon was uſually ſhut up with the family, and compelled to ad-

Deſcription of it, by Paré.

State of thoſe infected.

[205] Sully, vol. i. p. 53 and 54.

[206] Œuvres de Paré, p. 567, 568.

[207] Œuvres de Paré, p. 536, and p. 570.

miniſter

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miniſter help, while any perſons remained alive [208]. The calamity attained to its utmoſt point of horror and deſtruction, by the incapacity of burying the dead, whoſe bodies remaining in a ſtate of putrefaction, ſpread the infection to the ſurvivors. "Even the phyſicians themſelves were purſued," ſays Paré, "when they appeared "in the ſtreets, by the inhabitants, who attempted to murder them "with ſtones, like mad dogs; exclaiming, that they ought only to "come out by night, leſt they ſhould communicate the diſeaſe to "ſuch as had hitherto eſcaped its malignity [209]."

Cuſtom of leaving the dead, unburied.

The practice, common during a great part of the ſixteenth century, of leaving uninterred, the corpſes of thoſe who fell in battles, contributed, in no ſmall degree, to ſpread, and to produce the moſt peſtilential maladies. We cannot read without amazement and diſguſt, the recital made us by Paré, of the ſpectacle which the field of St. Quintin exhibited, ſome few days after that celebrated engagement, in the ſummer of 1557. "Several gentlemen," ſays he, "who were "ſent to endeavour to find the body of Monſieur de Bois-Dauphin, "who had been killed in the late action, requeſted me to accompany "them. Their ſearch was unſucceſsful; the putrefaction which had "univerſally taken place, having ſo diſfigured the corpſes, as to ren"der them no longer recognizable. We ſaw the earth covered with "human bodies, for more than half a league round us; and our ſtay "was ſhort, on account of the cadaverous ſtench, iſſuing from ſuch "a multitude of men and horſes. Our arrival diſturbed the flies, "which were ſettled on them: they were of a monſtrous ſize, with "green and blue backs. When they roſe into the air, ſuch were their "numbers, as to darken the ſun; and they buzzed in a marvellous "manner. I believe, that they were ſufficient to produce the "plague, in the place where they ſettled [210]."

[208] Œuvres de Paré, p. 570.
[209] Ibid. p. 568.
[210] Œuvres de Paré, p. 795.

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Other diſtempers.

If the ravages of the plague were, in a great degree, limited to the inferior orders of ſociety, there was another diſtemper frequent in that age, whoſe attacks were hardly leſs fatal, and which ſeemed to be directed againſt ſovereigns, in common with the meaneſt of their ſubjects. It is remarkable, that Paré, who has written on the nature, ſymptoms, and cure of this ſcourge of the human race, and whoſe authority muſt be regarded as ſuperior to any other of the period, does not ſeem to conſider it as imported from America. On the contrary, he ſays, that it was denominated by the Romans, "Pudendagra;" and, in another place, he aſſerts, that it reſembled, in many of its ſymptoms, the diſeaſe called "Mentagra," with which, under Tiberius, the Roman empire was afflicted [211]. The recital given by him of the effects, produced from its attacks on the body, cannot be peruſed without horror. Yet, he admits, in the moſt pointed terms, that, at the time when he wrote, under Charles the Ninth and Henry the Third, it was infinitely diminiſhed in violence. "The diſorder of the preſent time, is much leſs cruel, "and eaſier of cure, than it was, at its firſt commencement, in time "paſt; for, it evidently becomes mitigated, from day to day. Aſtrolo-"gers attribute this fact to the influences of the ſky."—"Phyſicians "rather chuſe to refer it to the invention of a number of excellent "remedies, which men of talents have diligently ſought, in order to "oppoſe ſo cruel an evil [212]."

Remedies.

Four different modes of treating the diſtemper, were known and practiſed, when Paré wrote, between 1570, and 1585. "The firſt," ſays he, "is the decoction of gum-guaiacum: the ſecond, by unc-"tions: the third, by mercury: the fourth, by perfumes [213]." But, he repeatedly and decidedly maintains, that the only ſpecific and ſovereign remedy, is mercury. He denominates it the true antidote; and compares it to a ferret, which chaſes and expels the malady, however concealed, or inveterate [214].

[211] Œuvres de Paré, p. 444, and p. 446.
[212] Ibid. p. 446.
[213] Œuvres de Paré, p. 447.
[214] Ibid. p. 444, and p. 449, and p. 555.

The

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The diſeaſe which Columbus is accuſed of having brought from the New World, was not felt in any of the royal houſes of Europe, in ſo ſevere a manner as in France. One of the moſt accompliſhed princes of the ſixteenth century, Francis the Firſt, expired in the vigor of his age and talents, from its incurable effects. It was in vain that Henry the Third addreſſed his prayers to the Virgin, or obtained jubilees from the ſovereign pontiffs. He had met with an accident, amidſt the ſplendor of his reception at Venice, in 1574, which had incapacitated him for perpetuating the family of Valois [215]. His brother, the duke of Alenſon, youngeſt of the four ſons of Henry the Second, and laſt deſcendant of ſo many monarchs, was even, if poſſible, more unfortunate. His face, diſfigured and hideous, expoſed him to univerſal pity, or deriſion; and his premature death was probably cauſed by the ſame complaint, which had abridged the life and reign of his grandfather [216]. After the lapſe of near a whole century ſince the introduction of that diſeaſe, we may judge how malignant it was ſtill eſteemed, and how little progreſs had been made in its extirpation or cure; by the regulations eſtabliſhed at the public baths of Plombieres, in Lorrain, as late as 1581. All women of pleaſure or diſorderly conduct, were prohibited, by order of the dukes of Lorrain, not only from preſuming to enter the baths; but, from approaching within five hundred paces of them, on pain of being whipped at the four corners of the town [217].

Francis the Firſt.

Henry the Third.

Duke of Alenſon.

Intermitting fevers.

Intermitting fevers and agues appear to have been general among armies and ſoldiers. It would be endleſs to cite examples; nor can we wonder at their frequency or obſtinacy, when we recollect, that the only ſpecific for thoſe diſorders, the bark of Peru, was not imported into Europe before the reign of Louis the Thirteenth [218]. It may excite a ſmile in the preſent age, to know that the French monarchs laid claim

[215] Davila, p. 598.

[216] Buſbeq. letter 19. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 701.

[217] Voyages de Montaigne, vol. i. p. 32.

[218] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Etrang. p. 182. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 106.

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to the ſame ſupernatural power of curing the ſchrophula, or king's evil, ſo long arrogated and exerciſed by the Engliſh princes. It was performed by touching with the right hand. Paré informs us, that in 1564, when Charles the Ninth, then ſcarcely fourteen years old, viſited Bayonne, Spaniards of condition came, to receive the benefit of his touch. He tacitly confeſſes, at the ſame time, its inefficacy, when he adds, that he afterwards treated them according to the principles of art, and effected ſeveral cures [219]. Henry the Third ſeems, very prudently, to have declined exerting its virtue on Epernon, his favorite, who, in 1584, was attacked with the diſeaſe ſo immediately ſubjected to his maſter's power and controul. The pretenſion ſeems, indeed, to have excited among men of liberality and education, not leſs ridicule in the ſixteenth, than in the eighteenth century [220].

King's evil.

Before we finally diſmiſs the period under our conſideration, it may be proper to take a general review of the great characteriſtic vices and virtues by which it was marked; and which ſtrongly diſcriminated it, as a portion of time, either from the age of Francis the Firſt which preceded it, or from that of Henry the Fourth, and Louis the Thirteenth, by which it was followed. Unhappily, the liſt of vices, includes many of the moſt deformed, or diſguſting features of human nature; whereas the virtues may be compriſed in a narrow compaſs. In both, we trace the genius of the nation, as it then exiſted; violent, intemperate, and carrying even its laudable qualities to a cenſurable exceſs. At the head of the vices, may be placed the practice of mingling oaths and imprecations in ordinary diſcourſe. It is well known, that Francis the Firſt, however diſſolute in his pleaſures, yet carefully abſtained from every ſpecies of profaneneſs of language. His common and peculiar atteſtation was, "on the faith of a gentleman," which he piqued himſelf on preſerving unſullied [221]. So different

General review of the period.

Characteriſtic vices.

Imprecations.

[219] Œuvres de Paré, p. 800.
[220] Buſbeq. letter 43.
[221] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 229.

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Education of Charles the Ninth.

were the habits of Charles the Ninth, that all his converſation was mingled with blaſphemous and indecent oaths. Catherine of Medecis was, herſelf, the cauſe of it, by placing him under the tuition of marſhal Retz, a Florentine, who infuſed into his pupil, the moſt odious principles. "He taught the young monarch," ſays de Thou, "to "ſwear, never to ſpeak the truth, and always to diſguiſe his "thoughts[222]." Can we wonder at the pernicious effects of ſuch a ſyſtem of education? The cuſtom was become univerſal, and excited ſo little animadverſion, that even children and peaſants, as well as gentlemen and ſoldiers, permitted themſelves an unbounded freedom of imprecation[223].

Univerſality of imprecations.

It will ſcarcely be credited, that "legends of oaths," containing every mode and variation of blaſphemy, were publiſhed, as if to circulate and facilitate their uſe[224]. We find that the practice excited, by its enormity, the attention of government. Henry the Third was, himſelf, exempt from the reproach, if we may believe Chiverny[225]: yet, ſir Edward Stafford, in his famous diſpatch to queen Elizabeth, of the 25th of February, 1588, expreſsly repeats the great oaths which the king ſwore during his diſcourſe[226]. In his harangue to the States at Blois, in December, of the ſame year, he ſtrongly inſiſted on the neceſſity of prohibiting blaſphemies, under ſevere penalties; and on the propriety of puniſhing, without diſtinction, all ſuch as ſhould be guilty of the practice[227]. He was followed by Montholon, the keeper of the ſeals, in the ſame aſſembly; who warned the nobility from provoking and drawing down the divine vengeance, by their execrable, and familiar cuſtom of ſwearing[228]. But, no effectual exertion was made for the reform of ſo general and diſgraceful a vice. The king of Navarre, in his declaration from Saumur, dated in April, 1589, warmly exhorts

Ineffectual attempts of government, to repreſs the practice,

and of the king of Navarre.

222 De Thou, vol. vii. p. 740.
223 La Noue, premier Diſcours, p. 6 and 7. Hiſt. des derniers Troubles de Fra. liv. ii. p. 38.
224 Eſprit de la Ligue, note, vol. ii. p. 103.
225 Chiverny, vol. i. p. 148.
226 Hardwick State Papers, vol. i. p. 251—264.
227 De Thou, vol. x. p. 378.
228 Ibid, p. 386.

the

the Catholic clergy to interpoſe their efforts for checking and ſuppreſſing it. The admonitions of a Hugonot and an excommunicated prince, were not, it muſt be owned, likely to awaken the zeal, or to ſtimulate the fervor of the Romiſh eccleſiaſtics [229]. We may ſee in Brantome, what ſtrange and eccentric imprecations were common among military men, who generally affected one peculiar to themſelves, and made uſe of it as their ſpecial form of atteſting, or aſſuring any fact [230].

Never, perhaps, was libertiniſm and debauch carried to a greater height, than under Henry the Third. It had gradually augmented ſince the acceſſion of Francis the Firſt, and it attained to an enormous pitch during the reign of his laſt deſcendant. Catherine of Medecis, deſtitute of ſentiments of virtue, and conſulting only intereſt or policy in all her ſteps, did not heſitate, throughout her whole life, to ſacrifice the chaſtity and honor of her female attendants, to the completion of her objects. Every negotiation was facilitated, and every treaty was cemented, by ſome victim, ſelected from among the numerous and brilliant circle of ladies, who attended her wherever ſhe moved. It was denominated the "Eſcadron volant [231]."— "The impudicity of the young women of the court in general," ſays a contemporary writer, "but, peculiarly, of the attendants of the "queen-mother, is ſo notorious, that among all the courtiers, not a "teſtimony could be found in their favour [232]." Mademoiſelle de Rouet, who was ſacrificed to Anthony, king of Navarre, and who attended him even to his laſt moments; Mademoiſelle de Limeuil, who, by the expreſs command of Catherine, permitted the criminal aſſiduities of Louis, prince of Condé, and was brought to bed in the queen-dowager's apartments; together with a long train of others, com-

Libertiniſm.

Diſſolute conduct of Catherine of Medecis.

[229] Chron. Nov. vol. i. p. 177. [230] Brant. vol. i. Cap. Fran. p. 104.

[231] Eſprit de la Ligue, vol. ii. p. 165 and 166, and p. 298. Trad. de l'Hopital, vol. ii. Recherches, p. 55.

[232] Tocſin des Maſſacres, p. 49, cited in the Confeſſion de Sancy, p. 461.

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memorated by Brantome and d'Aubigné, leave no room to doubt of the depravity of the court. An example ſo pernicious, did not fail to produce the worſt effects on the morals of the court, and of the nation. If we wiſh to read the deſcription of the former, as it exiſted in 1572, under Charles the Ninth; we may ſee it in the ſtrongeſt language and colors, by the pen of the queen of Navarre, Jane d'Albret, in a letter to her ſon, the prince of Bearn, afterwards Henry the Fourth. It is dated from Blois, where the French court then reſided, and merits to be univerſally known. The duplicity, and treachery of the king and his mother, are expoſed without diſguiſe. We trace in every line, the apprehenſions of a parent for her child, whoſe morals, ſhe dreaded, might be corrupted by the contact with ſo diſſolute a ſociety, from which not only religion, but decorum itſelf, was baniſhed. "It is not," ſays ſhe, "the men who ſolicit the "women here: the women corrupt and ſolicit the men[233]."

Letter of Jane d'Albret to her ſon.

Margaret of Valois.

Margaret of Valois, wife of Henry the Fourth, realized in her conduct, every thing related of the Meſſalinas and Fauſtinas of antiquity. Abandoned from her earlieſt years to the moſt ſhameleſs libertiniſm, ſhe rendered the court of Navarre a theatre of intrigue; and did not even heſitate to aid her huſband's amours, by every poſſible ſubſerviency[234]. She had ſcarcely attained her twenty-firſt year, when ſhe ſucceſsfully undertook, in concert with the duke of Guiſe, and the cardinal of Lorrain, to ſhake the nuptial fidelity of Mary of Cleves, princeſs of Condé, who was conducted to the duke of Anjou's bed, by Margaret[235]. Even to its lateſt period, her life was a perpetual ſcene of ſenſuality and proſtitution. She was imitated by the ladies of that voluptuous court, who blended libertiniſm even with the moſt pious exerciſes and acts of devotion. "The ducheſſes of Guiſe, and of "Nevers," ſays d'Aubigné, "had the portraits of their two lovers,

Her proſligacy, and debauchery.

[233] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. i. p. 869—601.
[234] Vie de Marg. p. 314. Vie d'Epernon, vol. i. p. 56.
[235] Vie de Marg. p. 126.

"Roque-

" Roquemont, and the baron de Fumel, painted as on the croſs, in " their prayer-books, and cloſets. They, in a ſimilar manner, had " the likeneſſes of their miſtreſſes, under the character and dreſs of " the Virgin." Such a profanation of the moſt ſacred myſteries of religion, excites not more amazement, than it impreſſes with horror.

Depraved and looſe education.

How looſe was the education beſtowed on young women of condition, and how licentious were the manners, we may ſee in the writings of l'Hopital. " The firſt leſſon of a mother to her daughter," ſays that ſevere and virtuous magiſtrate, " is to inſtruct her how to diſ- " tribute with grace, the edifice of her hair; to ſpoil by art the luſtre " of her natural attractions; to adorn her head with diamonds, and " her boſom with a necklace of gold. She next carries her to the " ſuppers of our prelates, ſo prolonged, and ſo licentious. The un- " fortunate girl is loſt at her return [236]." Brantome declares in the clearеſt and leaſt ambiguous language, that there was hardly a young woman, married or ſingle, who, on her firſt arrival at court, did not fall into the hands of the cardinal of Lorrain, and was not ſeduced by his preſents. " Few, or none," ſays he, " quitted the " court, with their honor [237]."

Its effects.

Encouragement given to vice by Henry the Third.

Henry the Third, not content with exhibiting in his own conduct, a model of the moſt depraved and effeminate debauch, endeavoured, by precept and exhortation, to encourage vice, and to render female chaſtity ridiculous. Either deſtitute of inclination or of ability to practiſe his own maxims, he delighted in defaming and expoſing the weakneſſes with which he became acquainted. " Never," ſays a contemporary writer, " did the court of our kings, in which formerly " the French nobility learnt the exerciſe of virtue, overflow ſo much " with every kind of diſorder, luxury, and exceſs, as under the reign " of Henry the Third; peculiarly, in the years 1586, and 1587. It " may be ſaid that every thing was then permitted, except to be vir-

[236] Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 234. Trad. de l'Hop. vol. i. Epitres, p. 128.

[237] Brant. vol. ii. Dames Gal. p. 418.

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Works of Brantome.

"tuous [238]." Brantome did not heſitate to dedicate his work, denominated, "The Lives of the Women of Gallantry of his own "Time," to the duke of Alenſon: a production, which, in depravity of ſentiment and of language, may rank with the worſt, of the worſt age [239]. It ſeems difficult to form an idea of a more abandoned court, than that which he depictures. "I knew," ſays he, "a Ve-"netian painter, by name Bernardo, who kept a ſhop at Paris: he "has ſworn to me, that within the ſpace of a year, he had ſold more "than fifty ſets of Aretino, to ladies, married and unmarried [240]." He

Depravity of the court.

aſſerts in another place, that women of beauty were commonly ſent by their huſbands, to ſolicit the judges in all cauſes of moment; and that it was notorious, how much the decrees and ſentences were affected by the compliances of female ſuitors [241]. La Noue, and le Laboureur, confirm, in the fulleſt manner, all the aſſertions of Brantome [242].

Entertainments and banquets of Henry the Third.

In the more ſelect and private pleaſures of that age and court, decency itſelf was withdrawn. In 1577, we find the king giving an entertainment to his brother, the duke of Alenſon, at the caſtle of Pleſſiz les Tours. The company was numerous, and all the gueſts of both ſexes were habited in green. It is hardly credible, that the ladies who aſſiſted at it, were dreſſed in men's clothes, half naked, having their hair looſe and floating on their backs, as it was then commonly worn by brides. In this diſorderly attire, they ſerved at table, and brought up the diſhes. It appears, that the queen-mother herſelf, though then in a very advanced age, was not aſhamed to aſſiſt, and to preſide at ſo indecent a banquet [243]. The amours of Henry became the opprobrium of mankind, and were ſuppoſed to

[238] Hiſt. des derniers Troub. de Fra. liv. ii. p. 39.—"a Lyons, 1597."

[239] Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. Dedication.

[240] Ibid. p. 60.

[241] Brant. vol. i. Dames Gal. p. 224 and 225.

[242] La Noue, p. 14—16. Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. ii. p. 102.

[243] L'Etoile, p. 21.

be

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be of a nature, which the purity and dignity of hiſtory cannot mention, without contamination. His minions ſubjected him to the contumely and abhorrence of his own ſubjects. They were young men, whoſe dreſs and manners partook more of a feminine, than of a manly beauty. An author of that period, deſcribing them as they commonly appeared in 1576, ſays, "that they wore their hair "long, frized to a great degree, and turning up over their little "velvet bonnets, preciſely like women [244]." Alluſions to the apprehended nature of his attachment towards them, were made in all the ſatirical verſes or epigrams of the time.

Minions of that monarch.

Satires.

We find in d'Aubigné, who, though a Hugonot, is a writer of veracity, and who had acceſs to the higheſt information; that the king contracted a marriage with Quelus, and afterwards with another of his minions. The contract of this abominable union was even ſigned by Henry, in his own blood; and the marquis d'O, ſuperintendant of the finances, witneſſed it in the ſame manner, having opened one of his veins, for the purpoſe. After the death of Maugiron, the king laviſhed marks of fondneſs and affection on his corpſe, which are not to be reflected on without aſtoniſhment, nor related without debaſing the dignity of the human ſpecies, and ſtaining the Engliſh language. It is only in the effeminate and monſtrous vices of the Syrian, Heliogabalus, that we can find in antiquity, any parallel to thoſe of Henry the Third. The younger part of the members, deputed to the States General, convoked at Blois, in 1588, complained publickly, in their letters to the provinces by whom they were ſent, that attempts were not only made to corrupt their principles, and to gain their ſuffrages; but, to ſubject them to the pleaſures of their ſovereign [245].

Vices.

By a refinement in vice and impiety, which excites horror, he made even the exerciſes of devotion ſubſervient to his deteſtable

Profanations.

[244] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 70.

[245] Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 201, 202, and p. 219.

gratifi-

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gratifications. The moſt ſkilful artiſts were employed in adorning his miſſals and prayer-books, with the portraits of his minions, habited in the monaſtic dreſs of St. Francis, or of St. Jerome. We can ſcarcely believe, if it was not aſſerted by contemporary writers of the beſt authority, that ſeveral of the moſt favoured, were repreſented on the croſs, with the attributes of our Saviour; and others, depictured and dreſſed in the character of the Virgin Mary [246]. To render this monument of impious ſenſuality ſtill more ſingular, it was conſecrated to vengeance, as well as to pleaſure. At the end of the prayers, were ſimilar portraits of the individuals, who had rejected and diſdained his ſolicitations. Among them, was peculiarly diſtinguiſhed the head of Francis de Chatillon, ſon to the admiral Coligni, with his ſleeves turned up, in order to diſplay his arms. Round it, was this inſcription: "Non per amor, mà per ven-" detta [247]." It is difficult to conceive, or to convey an idea of greater depravity; nor can we wonder at the indignation and contempt which ſuch a conduct excited, not only in the court, but, throughout the country.

Order of the Holy Ghoſt.

Tavannes does not heſitate to ſay, that the inſtitution of the order of the Holy Ghoſt, in 1579, was only deſigned to commemorate the amours of the king with his two minions, Quelus and Maugiron, who had been recently killed in a duel; and, that he celebrated by it, their funeral games, in imitation of Alexander, and Hadrian, who had thus immortalized their favorites, Epheſtion, and Antinous [248]. It is true, that he mentions this extraordinary fact, as poſſibly, only a calumny; but, he allows, that Henry the Fourth altered the cyphers and devices worn by the knights, which implies the truth of the report [249].

[246] D'Aubigné, Hiſtoire Gen. vol. iii. p. 362. Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 213, 214, and p. 223—225, and p. 234, and p. 236.

[247] Confeſſ. de Sancy, p. 204.

[248] Tavannes, p. 179.

[249] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 41.

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Corruption, and venality.

Public honor and principle did not ſurvive the extinction of private virtue and morality. Corruption found its way into the higheſt departments, and every thing became venal. Under Henry the Second, the conſtable Montmorency did not bluſh to accept the eſtate and caſtle of Chateaubriant, from the count of that name, in recompence for the order of St. Michael, obtained through his intereſt [250]. But, though he forgot his own dignity in ſuch a tranſaction, he would have been incapable of betraying his maſter to his foreign enemies. After the acceſſion of Charles the Ninth, miniſters occupying the firſt employments of ſtate, were ſo baſe as to ſell their ſovereign and their country to Spain. In 1565, when Philip the Second meditated his deteſtable project of ſeizing and delivering over Jane d'Albret, queen of Navarre, together with her two children, to the Inquiſition; intelligence of the deſign was communicated to the French court, by Elizabeth, queen of Spain, ſiſter to Charles the Ninth. The Spaniſh officer, who was charged with diſpatches, containing not only the particulars of that plot; but, of the machinations of Philip againſt the repoſe of the French monarchy, might have been eaſily apprehended on his road to Paris, or on his return to Madrid: but, the king of Spain had already found means to corrupt, and to purchaſe ſome of the moſt confidential ſervants of his brother-in-law, who averted the blow, and permitted the courier to perform his journey, unmoleſted. L'Aubeſpine, firſt ſecretary of ſtate, was Philip's penſioner; and ſo notorious was his corruption, that the conſtable Montmorency no ſooner knew of l'Aubeſpine's having been acquainted with the tranſaction by Catherine of Medecis, than he inſtantly predicted the conſequence; and foretold, that the courier would be allowed to quit Paris without injury [251].

Examples of thoſe vices.

Miniſters, ſold to Spain.

L'Aubeſpine.

[250] Brant. vol. ii. Cap. Fran. p. 124.

[251] Villeroy, Memoires, vol. ii. p. 56 and 57.

During

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During the reign of Henry the Third, it was not even doubted, that Spaniſh gold pervaded the inmoſt receſſes of the cabinet.

Villeroy.

In 1587, the duke of Epernon reproached Villeroy, then ſecretary of ſtate, in preſence of the king himſelf, with betraying to the League and to Philip the Second, every ſecret of importance. So rude an inſult was ſuppoſed to have been committed with the royal participation and concurrence. Epernon accuſed him of receiving a penſion of double piſtoles [252]. It is, however, certain, that Villeroy, in his Memoirs, while he avows the corruption of the age and of the miniſtry, juſtifies himſelf, in a ſatisfactory manner, from having taken money, or accepted any pecuniary bribe [253]. The treaſonable correſpondence and connexion between the Guiſes, as heads of the League, and the king of Spain, was ſo undiſguiſed, that ſcarcely even a veil was drawn over the tranſaction. We may judge, of what nature, and how momentous, were the ſervices to be rendered on the part of the princes of Lorrain, by the magnitude of the ſums received from Philip. After the aſſaſſination of the duke, at Blois, in 1588, it was aſcertained, that he carried on a regular intercourſe with Spain and Savoy. The amount of the money tranſmitted him by the former power, during ten years, ſince the death of Don John of Auſtria, did not fall much ſhort of two hundred thouſand pounds [254]. It muſt be owned, that Philip paid dear for the alliance and friendſhip of the Guiſes. In return, they convulſed, and had nearly overturned the French monarchy. The remittances from Madrid, enabled them to ſhake the fidelity of many of the royal governors. Villars, to whom Havre-de-Grace had been entruſted, ſold the place, together with himſelf, in 1588, to the League, for fifteen thouſand crowns [255]. His conduct was, by no means, ſingular.

The Guiſes. Their connexion with Philip the Second.

Vaſt ſums expended by that prince.

[252] Memoires pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 228.

[253] Villeroy, Mem. vol. i. p. 122—126.

[254] De Thou, vol. x. p. 480. Villeroy, Mem. vol. iii. p. 123.

[255] Davila, p. 676.

It

Corruption in foreign courts.

It is curious to ſee, that the ſame venality which ſo ſtrongly marked the French court and miniſters, was practiſed by Charles the Ninth and his ſucceſſor with ſimilar induſtry, if not with ſimilar ſucceſs, in other kingdoms. We cannot doubt, from the original letters ſtill exiſting of thoſe two monarchs, addreſſed to the embaſſador of France in England, that they diſpenſed continual largeſſes and penſions, to perſons occupying the higheſt public ſituations about Elizabeth. The great object of both princes, was to effect the marriage of the duke of Alenſon with the Engliſh queen. In order to compaſs it, no promiſes, engagements, or preſents, were ſpared: but, the two former were more liberally beſtowed than the latter. Ladies, who could facilitate, or accelerate the propoſed match, found reaſon to be ſatisfied with the liberality and attention of the queen-dowager. Catherine of Medecis, writing on the 29th of April, 1573, to the embaſſador at London, ſays: "I ſhall cauſe to be preſented to the Sieur de Walſingham, as he "paſſes through Paris, on his return home, two pieces of fine "black ſilk cloth for his wife, and two others in colors, with gold "and ſilver intermixed, for her daughter; in order to gratify him "as much as poſſible, on account of the hope that I have in his "promiſes, to do all in his power towards accompliſhing the ſaid "marriage[256]." Sir Francis Walſingham was at that time going over to England, from his embaſſy in France. That the earl of Leiceſter ſhould accept of penſions, or gratifications, from a foreign prince, cannot excite ſurprize. His rapacity and his other vices, juſtify the imputation. But, that the lord-treaſurer Burleigh, condeſcended to receive the gold of Charles the Ninth, and to bargain for the ſurrender of his miſtreſs to the duke of Alenſon, is more difficult to believe. If, however, the diſpatches of the king of France, and his mother, of "the 18th of January, 1574," do not

England.

Letter of Catherine of Medecis.

Lord Burleigh.

[256] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 330.

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abſolutely prove this fact; it muſt be owned, that they afford ſtrong preſumptions of its exiſtence[257]. We find the earl of Leiceſter, four years afterwards, in 1578, expreſſing his diſcontent to the French embaſſador, at the non-performance of the promiſes of money, which had been made to him, on the part of Henry the Third. That prince renews his aſſurances of being liberal in future, and relies on the earl's beſt exertions to cultivate the friendſhip between the queen and himſelf[258].

Earl of Leiceſter.

Irreligion, and impiety.

It cannot excite wonder, that in a period ſo corrupt and diſſolute, religion was overborne by the torrent of immorality. True piety could not exiſt in ſo contagious an atmoſphere. Infidelity, impiety, and even atheiſm, were characteriſtics of the nation, and had made a general progreſs among every rank of men. The long continuance of the civil wars, had tended to render the two parties equally indifferent to that very cauſe which originally produced them[259]. Such was the open contempt of the Catholic troops of the duke of Mayenne, for the ordinances of the Romiſh faith, that, in 1589, they not only tranſgreſſed againſt one of its moſt peremptory injunctions, by eating fleſh publickly during Lent; but, they added to it mockery and profanation. By menaces of death, they compelled the prieſts to baptize ſheep, pigs, and other animals, and to call them by the names of various kinds of fiſh. The duke of Mayenne was obliged to tolerate theſe enormities, which ſtrongly prove the univerſal diſſolution of manners[260]. We may cloſe the liſt of vices, by one of a nature more immediately deſtructive than any hitherto enumerated; but, which has been already deſcribed in its effects. The unlimited ſcope and exerciſe of vengeance deſolated private life; armed individuals againſt each other; produced aſſaſſinations, duels, and murders; and converted the kingdom into a vaſt charnel houſe.

Profanations, committed by the Catholic ſoldiery.

Exerciſe of private vengeance.

[257] Le Lab. ſur Caſt. vol. iii. p. 373. [258] Ibid. p. 551.
[259] La Noue, p. 5—7. Hiſt. des der. Troub. de Fra. p. 38.
[260] Mem. pour ſer. a l'Hiſt. de Fra. p. 282 an 283.

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The characteriſtic virtues of the period were few; and far from diſpelling, they ſcarcely illuminate the darkneſs. Some illuſtrious examples of inflexible integrity; of loyalty and public virtue; and even of a magnanimous dereliction or contempt of private intereſt, when oppoſed to the general welfare; may, indeed, be produced. The names of Olivier, and of l'Hopital, ſucceſſively chancellors of France, and of Chriſtopher de Thou, firſt preſident of the Parliament of Paris: thoſe of Francis of Montmorency, of marſhal d'Aumont, of Sancy, of Souvré, and of ſeveral others, might diffuſe a luſtre over the worſt age: but, ſuch are to be found under Domitian, and under Commodus, and can only be conſidered as ſhining exceptions to the national character. It is with difficulty, that among a people ſo corrupt, we diſcover ſome amiable or elevated qualities allied to virtue, and challenging our eſteem, or admiration. The ſame impartiality which ſtigmatizes vice and crime, demands the commemoration of whatever is laudable and generous. Even the ſhadow may be pourtrayed, if we cannot graſp the ſubſtance; and it is pleaſing, after the ſurvey of ſo depraved a time, to conſider man under a leſs diſguſting form.

Virtues of the period, few.

Parental authority and filial reſpect, ſeem to have ſurvived the extinction of general philanthropy, and to have been held in the higheſt honor, even by thoſe who did not affect a regard for any other ſpecies of reputation. Francis of Montmorency, eldeſt ſon to the conſtable of that name, long after he had attained to manhood, and when married to the natural daughter of Henry the Second; yet addreſſes his father with a humility and reverence, which recals the idea of the primitive, and patriarchal ages of the world[261]. Margaret of Valois herſelf, though one of the moſt diſſolute women who ever diſgraced her ſex; far from being deficient on this point, appears to have ſcrupulouſly fulfilled her

Filial piety and obedience.

Examples of it.

Margaret of Valois.

[261] Manuſc. de Bethune, N° 8673, cited in the Trad. de l'Hop. vol. ii. Recherches, p. 105.

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filial duties. We may ſee in her own Memoirs, with what awe and implicit deference, ſhe receives and obeys the orders of her mother, even after ſhe became queen of Navarre, and ſeemed to be by that circumſtance, emancipated in a great meaſure, from a ſtate of ſubjection. The ducheſs of Lorrain, her elder ſiſter, expreſſes ſimilar ſentiments towards Catherine of Medecis; who uſes the moſt authoritative language, and is obeyed in ſilence, without a murmur [262]. "I have always preſerved," ſays ſhe, in another part of her Memoirs, "that reſpect to the queen, my mo-"ther, that whenever I have been with her, whether married or "ſingle, I never went to any place, without having aſked her leave, "and obtained her permiſſion [263]." We trace in Sully, Chiverny, Tavannes, and d'Aubigné, the ſame humility on one ſide, and the ſame exertion of parental authority on the other.

Courage, and contempt of death.

Courage, which is not improperly defined to be rather a happy quality than a virtue, has been found in every period, and among every people. It has, notwithſtanding, from the effect of natural, political, or moral cauſes, been heightened, or depreſſed; and we do not conſider the degenerate Romans under Conſtantine and Juſtinian, as equal to the legions who ſubjected Macedonia, Carthage, and Gaul. The ſpirit of chivalry raiſed and ſublimed the valor of the Gothic nations, who overran Europe in the middle ages. Under the laſt princes of Valois, continued ſcenes of ſlaughter and civil war had produced a familiarity with death, and bereaved it of the terrors which accompany the laſt act of life. Men became accuſtomed to contemplate it under every form, and to regard it as continually imminent, or probable. They looked on it with a ſteady eye, and awaited it with a ſort of ſullen intrepidity, whether on the ſcaffold, in a dungeon, or in a field of battle. Education, habit, and enthuſiaſm, all conſpired to

Cauſes of it.

Genius of the age.

[262] Memoires de Marguerite, a Paris, 1658, p. 19, and p. 36.

[263] Ibid. p. 54.

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ſteel the mind, and to produce a diſregard of peril and diſſolution. D'Aubigné tells us, that in the year 1560, when he was ſcarcely nine years old, his father carried him to Paris. On their way through Amboiſe, they beheld the heads of the Hugonots, who had been recently executed for the conſpiracy againſt the Guiſes, planted upon poles, and which were ſtill eaſy to be recognized. "At ſo lamentable a ſight, my father," ſays he, "was deeply "moved, and his agitation was viſible on his countenance. When "we had left the town, he laid his hand upon my head, and "addreſſing me, ſaid; My child, thou muſt not ſpare thy head "after mine, to avenge thoſe honorable chiefs whoſe remains "thou haſt juſt ſeen; and if thou ſpare thyſelf, thou ſhalt have "my malediction [264]." We may naturally conceive what muſt have been the effect on a young and ſenſible mind, of ſuch an exhortation. D'Aubigne's whole life was paſſed in fulfilling his father's injunctions. We muſt not imagine that the romantic honor inſpired by chivalry, was totally extinct, even in the times which we have reviewed. Some traces of it appear, and excite admiration. D'Aubigné ſays, that when on the point of commencing a ſkirmiſh, having remarked, that no other of his comrades was covered with mail on their arms, except himſelf; he diſdained an advantage which was not common to the whole troop, and immediately threw away thoſe pieces of defenſive armor [265].

D'Aubigné.

Traces of the ſpirit of chivalry.

Friendſhip ſeems to have been cultivated with uncommon ardor, and the demonſtrations of it to have been frequently carried even to a pitch of exceſs, during the time under our conſideration. The duke of Alenſon, flying from Paris, in 1575, firſt clothed himſelf in the doublet of his unfortunate favourite and friend la Mole, whoſe attachment had conducted him to a ſcaffold, under Charles the Ninth [266]. It was not uncommon to neglect every

Friendſhip.

[264] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 5 and 6. [265] Ibid. p. 61. [266] Vie de Marg. p. 164.

ſpecies

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Romantic teſtimonies of grief.

ſpecies of dreſs or ornament, and even to allow the hair and beard to grow, in ſign of regret for the temporary loſs, or abſence of a companion. When d'Aubigné, in 1583, was diſpatched by the king of Navarre, to demand reparation of Henry the Third, for the treatment ſhewn to the wife of the one, and the ſiſter of the other; St. Gelais, his friend, penetrated with grief, fell into a ſtate of dejection, and permitted his appearance to diſplay the melancholy which he felt at the event. "On my return," ſays d'Aubigné, "to Pau, the king was walking in the garden "of the caſtle; and he no ſooner ſaw me, than he inſtantly ſaid "to one of his gentlemen; Go, tell St. Gelais to ſhave himſelf, "and to cut his hair, ſince his friend is ſafely arrived[267]."

Concluſion: Reflexions.

This liſt of virtues, ſhort as it may appear, includes all thoſe which can be properly ſaid to diſcriminate and characterize the age. There are however, many ſofter features, of a doubtful or equivocal nature, which neceſſarily, from their minuteneſs, eſcape the reſearch of hiſtory. It ſuffices to have marked the outline with an impartial hand; and to have endeavoured to convey a juſt, though an imperfect and defective idea, of a period of time, which, notwithſtanding the vices that deformed and debaſed it, will ever, from the magnitude of the events with which it is crouded, powerfully awaken the attention of the moſt remote poſterity.

[267] D'Aub. Memoires, p. 99.

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Government of Maharashtra
on 26 July, 2016